

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, June 1, 2007

**Statement on Congressional Passage
of Emergency Supplemental
Appropriations**

May 25, 2007

Congress voted yesterday to provide our troops with the funding and flexibility they need to protect our country, and I was pleased to sign the bill today. Rather than mandate arbitrary timetables for troop withdrawals or micromanage our military commanders, this legislation enables our service men and women to follow the judgment of commanders on the ground.

This important bill also provides a clear roadmap to help the Iraqis secure their country and strengthen their young democracy. Iraqis need to demonstrate measurable progress on a series of benchmarks for improved security, political reconciliation, and governance. These tasks will be difficult for this young democracy, but we are confident they will continue to make progress on the goals they have set for themselves.

I am pleased that Congress removed billions of dollars in unrequested spending. I would like to have removed even more, but this package was part of the effort to move forward and ensure our troops in harm's way have the resources they need.

I congratulate Members of Congress for coming together in a bipartisan fashion and providing the necessary funding for our troops and support for the Iraqi people.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 2206, which was assigned Public Law No. 110-28. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

May 26, 2007

Good morning. This Memorial Day weekend, Americans honor those who have given their lives in service to our Nation. As we

pay tribute to the brave men and women who died for our freedom, we also honor those who are defending our liberties around the world today.

On Wednesday, I met with some of the courageous young men and women who will soon take their place in the defense of our Nation, the graduating class of the United States Coast Guard Academy. Since its inception, the Coast Guard has patrolled and protected America's shores. And in this time of war, the Coast Guard has assumed new responsibilities to defend our Nation against terrorist infiltration and help stop new attacks. I was proud to stand with the class of 2007 and thank them for their bold decision to wear the uniform.

The men and women of the Coast Guard are fighting alongside soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who have also volunteered to protect America. We live in freedom because patriots such as these are willing to serve, and many have given their lives in defense of our Nation. On Monday, I will lay a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in their country's cause.

One of those who gave his life was Sergeant David Christoff, Jr., of Rossford, Ohio. The day after the attacks of September the 11th, David walked into a recruiting station to become a United States marine. Asked why he made the decision to serve, David said, "I don't want my brother and sister to live in fear." David eventually deployed to Iraq, where he fought street by street in the battle of Fallujah and earned a Purple Heart for wounds suffered in action.

While on leave back home, David learned his company was headed for combat in Afghanistan. But he knew there was also a job to finish in Iraq. So he asked to be reassigned to a unit headed for Iraq, and last May, he died in Anbar Province, where the marines are taking the fight to Al Qaida. When his family received his belongings, his mother

and his father each found a letter from David. He asked that they pray for his fellow marines and all those still serving overseas.

On Memorial Day, our Nation honors Sergeant Christoff's final request. We pray for our men and women serving in harm's way. We pray for their safe return. And we pray for their families and loved ones, who also serve our country with their support and sacrifice.

On Memorial Day, we rededicate ourselves to freedom's cause. In Iraq and Afghanistan, millions have shown their desire to be free. We are determined to help them secure their liberty. Our troops are helping them build democracies that respect the rights of their people, uphold the rule of law, and fight extremists alongside America in the war on terror. With the valor and determination of our men and women in uniform, I am confident that we will succeed and leave a world that is safer and more peaceful for our children and grandchildren.

On Memorial Day, we also pay tribute to Americans from every generation who have given their lives for our freedom. From Valley Forge to Vietnam, from Kuwait to Kandahar, from Berlin to Baghdad, brave men and women have given up their own futures so that others might have a future of freedom. Because of their sacrifice, millions here and around the world enjoy the blessings of liberty. And wherever these patriots rest, we offer them the respect and gratitude of our Nation.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on May 25 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 25 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia *May 28, 2007*

Thank you all. Secretary England, members of the Cabinet, General Pace, Members of Congress, members of the United States

military, veterans, families of the fallen, my fellow citizens: Welcome.

Today we honor the warriors who fought our Nation's enemies, defended the cause of liberty, and gave their lives in the cause of freedom. We offer our love and our heartfelt compassion to the families who mourn them. We pray that our country may always prove worthy of the sacrifices they made.

For seven generations, we have carried our fallen to these fields. Here rest some 360,000 Americans who died fighting to preserve the Union and end slavery. Here rest some 500,000 Americans who perished in two World Wars to conquer tyrannies and build free nations from their ruins. Here rest some 90,000 Americans who gave their lives to confront Communist aggression in places such as Korea and Vietnam.

Many names here are known: the 18-year-old Union soldier named Arthur MacArthur who grabbed a falling flag and carried it up Missionary Ridge; the Tuskegee Airmen who defended America abroad and challenged prejudice at home; the slain war hero and President who asked that we "assure the survival and success of liberty" and found his rest beneath an eternal flame. Still others here are remembered only by loving families. Some are known only to God.

Now this hallowed ground receives a new generation of heroes, men and women who gave their lives in places such as Kabul and Kandahar, Baghdad and Ramadi. Like those who came before them, they did not want war, but they answered the call when it came. They believed in something larger than themselves. They fought for our country, and our country unites to mourn them as one.

We remember Army Specialist Ross Andrew McGinnis. Ross was born on Flag Day in 1987. When he was in kindergarten, he said he wanted to grow up to be "an Army man." He enlisted at 17—the first day he was eligible. He deployed to Iraq. Last December, a grenade was thrown into his Humvee as Ross was patrolling the streets of Baghdad. The soldiers inside could not escape in time, so Ross leapt into the vehicle and covered the grenade with his own body. By sacrificing himself to save four other men, he earned a Silver Star and the eternal gratitude of the American people.

We remember Marine Sergeant Marc Golczynski of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Marc volunteered for a second tour of duty in Iraq. He knew the dangers his service would entail. Before he deployed, he wrote the following in an e-mail to his family and friends: "Please don't feel bad for us. We are warriors, and as warriors have done before us, we fight and sometimes die so our families do not have to." Marc left behind an 8-year-old son, Christian, who is with us today. He managed to be brave while he held his father's folded flag.

With us are other children and families mourning moms and dads and sons and daughters. Nothing said today will ease your pain. But each of you need to know that your country thanks you, and we embrace you, and we will never forget the terrible loss you have suffered. I hope you find comfort in knowing that your loved ones rest in a place even more peaceful than the fields that surround us here.

The greatest memorial to our fallen troops cannot be found in the words we say or the places we gather. The more lasting tribute is all around us—a country where citizens have the right to worship as they want, to march for what they believe, and to say what they think. These freedoms came at great costs, and they will survive only as long as there are those willing to step forward to defend them against determined enemies.

As before in our history, Americans find ourselves under attack and underestimated. Our enemies long for our retreat. They question our moral purpose. They doubt our strength of will. Yet even after 5 years of war, our finest citizens continue to answer our enemies with courage and confidence. Hundreds of thousands of patriots still raise their hands to serve their country; tens of thousands who have seen war on the battlefield volunteer to reenlist. What an amazing country, to produce such fine citizens.

Laura and I have met many of them. We've sat at the bedsides of the wounded. This morning I met with servicemembers who received medals for distinguished service and found myself humbled by their grace and their grit. I had the honor of meeting with families of the fallen in the Oval Office

and was amazed by their strength and resolve and decent grace under pressure.

We've heard of 174 marines recently—almost a quarter of a battalion—who asked to have their enlistments extended. For these extensions, they would earn no promotion and no promise of a favored posting. They want to serve their Nation. And as one of them put it, "I'm here so our sons don't have to come and fight here someday."

Those who serve are not fatalists or cynics. They know that one day, this war will end—as all wars do. Our duty is to ensure that its outcome justifies the sacrifices made by those who fought and died in it. From their deaths must come a world where the cruel dreams of tyrants and terrorists are frustrated and foiled, where our Nation is more secure from attack, and where the gift of liberty is secured for millions who have never known it.

This is our country's calling. It's our country's destiny. Americans set off on that voyage more than two centuries ago, confident that this future was within our reach, even though the shore was distant and even though the journey may be long. And through generations, our course has been secured by those who wear a uniform, secured by people who man their posts and do their duty. They have helped us grow stronger with each new sunrise.

On this day of memory, we mourn brave citizens who laid their lives down for our freedom. They lived and died as Americans. May we always honor them. May we always embrace them. And may we always be faithful to who they were and what they fought for.

Thank you for having me. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery.

Remarks on the Situation in Darfur, Sudan

May 29, 2007

Good morning. For too long, the people of Darfur have suffered at the hands of a

Government that is complicit in the bombing, murder, and rape of innocent civilians. My administration has called these actions by their rightful name: genocide. The world has a responsibility to help put an end to it.

Last month, I announced that the United States was prepared to take new steps if the Government of Sudan did not allow the full deployment of a U.N. peacekeeping force, if the Government did not begin living up to its many commitments, that the United States would act. I made clear that the time for promises was over, and that President Bashir had to do something to end the suffering.

I held off implementing these steps because the United Nations believed that President Bashir could meet his obligations to stop the killing and would meet his obligations to stop the killing. Unfortunately, he hasn't met those obligations. President Bashir's actions over the past few weeks follow a long pattern of promising cooperation while finding new methods for obstruction.

One day after I spoke, the military bombed a meeting of rebel commanders designed to discuss a possible peace deal with the Government. In the following weeks, he used his army and Government-sponsored militias to attack rebels and civilians in south Darfur. He's taken no steps to disarm these militias in the year since the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed. Senior officials continue to oppose the deployment of the U.N. peacekeeping force.

The result is that the dire security situation on the ground in Darfur has not changed. And so today, at my instruction, the United States has taken the steps I announced in April.

First, the Department of Treasury is tightening U.S. economic sanctions on Sudan. With this new effort, the United States will more aggressively enforce existing sanctions against Sudan's Government.

As part of this effort, the Treasury Department will add 30 companies owned or controlled by the Government of Sudan to its list of Specially Designated Nationals. We're also adding an additional company to the list, a company that has been transporting weapons to the Sudanese Government and militia

forces in Darfur. All these companies are now barred from the U.S. financial system. It is a crime for American companies and individuals to knowingly do business with them.

Second, we're targeting sanctions against individuals responsible for violence. These sanctions will isolate these persons by cutting them off from the U.S. financial system, barring them from doing business with any American citizen or company, and calling the world's attention to their crimes.

Third, I'm directing the Secretary of State to consult with the United Kingdom and other allies on a new United Nations Security Council resolution. This resolution will apply new sanctions against the Government of Sudan, against individuals found to be violating human rights or obstructing the peace process. It will impose an expanded embargo on arms sales to the Government of Sudan. It will prohibit the Sudanese Government from conducting any offensive military flights over Darfur. It will strengthen our ability to monitor and report any violations.

At the same time, we will continue to push for U.N. support, including funding for the African Union peacekeepers, who remain the only force in Darfur that is protecting the people. We will continue to work for the deployment of a larger, hybrid force of AU and U.N. peacekeeping troops. We will continue to support the diplomacy of U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. We will continue to insist on the full implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. We will continue to promote a broadly supported and inclusive political settlement that is the only long-term solution to the crisis in Darfur.

America's commitment is clear. Since this conflict began, we have provided more than \$1.7 billion in humanitarian and peacekeeping assistance for Darfur. We are the world's largest single donor to the people of Darfur. We're working for the day when the families of this troubled region are allowed to return safely to their homes and rebuild their lives in peace.

The people of Darfur are crying out for help, and they deserve it. I urge the United Nations Security Council, the African Union,

and all members of the international community to reject any efforts to obstruct implementation of the agreements that would bring peace to Darfur and Sudan.

I call on President Bashir to stop his obstruction and to allow the peacekeepers in and to end the campaign of violence that continues to target innocent men, women, and children. And I promise this to the people of Darfur: The United States will not avert our eyes from a crisis that challenges the conscience of the world.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 a.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Umar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan.

Remarks Following a Briefing on the Georgia and Florida Wildfires in Brunswick, Georgia

May 29, 2007

I've just had an extensive briefing on the fires here in Georgia and Florida. You can see on the map back there, the fire covers a lot of area. A lot of timberland is being burnt down. A lot of people's livelihoods are being affected. A lot of good country is being destroyed. And a lot of good people are fighting the fires.

First, I appreciate very much the folks that have put a strategy in place to deal with these fires. They're doing their very best to contain the fires. But the best solution, of course, would be if the weather patterns change. And until that, they're going to be fighting these fires. And we've got a lot of brave men and women on the frontlines doing it.

Secondly, I got a briefing from the local officials about what the Federal Government ought to continue to do. Right now, the coordination is good, in terms of fighting the fires. The question is, can we help them even more? And so we'll take back the recommendations to Washington. Secretary Chertoff will look very carefully at the recommendations, and then work closely with Senator Chambliss and Senator Martinez about what we can do to help the good people down here.

It's a very difficult period for the people, particularly in southeast Georgia and north Florida. A lot of lives are being affected. I've come down to let the people know that we are concerned about their livelihood, that I'm fully aware of the nature of these fires, that we strongly support the efforts being done here to fight these fires, and we wish the people all the best.

In the meantime, we'll be analyzing ways that we can help even further. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 a.m. at Airport Fire Station Number Five at the Brunswick Golden Isles Airport.

Remarks at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynn, Georgia

May 29, 2007

Thank you all very much. Please be seated, unless, of course, you don't have a chair. [Laughter] Thanks for having me. I'm honored to be here at the headquarters of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

I don't know whether you realize this or not, but the Government originally planned to open this center inside the Capital Beltway. No one looks very sad that we didn't open it in front of the Capital Beltway. [Laughter] It's a spectacular place to have this center. It is a glorious place to live. I'm honored to be in your presence. Thanks for letting me come by and share some thoughts with you.

I want to thank Director Patrick for her strong leadership and her kind introduction. I appreciate very much the tour I have just taken. A lot of our fellow citizens probably don't know what goes on here, but this is a center full of smart, capable instructors who are helping to train men and women who've volunteered to serve our country on the frontlines of protecting the homeland. I am grateful to be in your midst. I thank those of you who work here; I thank those of you who are being trained here; and I thank your families as well.

We have a mission, a vital mission, and that's to protect our country. And you all are on the frontlines of that protection. And it gives me great confidence when I meet you

to tell the American people, there's a lot of decent souls doing everything they can to provide security for the American people. So, thanks.

I appreciate the folks at FLETC that I met that are working the border and helping train people to secure this border of ours. And I've come today not only to thank you but to talk about immigration. Immigration is a vital issue facing this country. And the fundamental question is, will elected officials have the courage necessary to put a comprehensive immigration plan in place that makes it more likely we can enforce our border and, at the same time, uphold the great traditions—the immigrant traditions of the United States of America? And that's what I want to discuss with you.

Before I do, I do want to introduce some people. I want to introduce Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez. I appreciate you coming, Mr. Secretary. Carlos wasn't born here, see. He was born in another country, Cuba. And now he sits in the Cabinet of the President of the United States. There's something great about a country that welcomes people, people who uphold our laws and realize the great blessings of America.

With us, as well, is Senator Mel Martinez. He wasn't born in America. He's a Senator from Florida. He was born in Cuba. I don't know if you know his story, but his mother and father put him on an airplane to come to the United States of America to be raised by total strangers because they didn't want their son to grow up under a tyrant named Fidel Castro. He used to sit in the Cabinet of the President of the United States; now he sits in the United States Senate. What a wonderful country it is, where people can come to live in a country based upon liberty and realize the great blessings of our country.

And I want to mention those two men because, to me, they represent what the immigration debate is all about. Will we be a welcoming place, a place of law, that renews our spirit by giving people a chance to succeed? So, Senator, thank you for coming as well.

I've saved the other two traveling with me because they were born here—[laughter]—starting with the United States Senator from Georgia, a south Georgian named Saxby

Chambliss, one of the finest Senators in the United States Senate.

Finally, I asked Secretary Mike Chertoff to leave the bench to become the Director of the Department of Homeland Security. It's a big job. It's a job that requires organizing various agencies under one task, and that's to provide protection to the American people. And Secretary Chertoff is doing a fine job. I'm glad he's joined us today. Thanks for coming, Mr. Secretary.

I thank all the State and local officials who are here, who have joined us. I appreciate you taking time to come over and say hello. I thank the citizens from this part of the world who have joined us as well. Thanks for supporting this good institution. I know you know this, but FLETC provides an important role for this country of ours, and I thank you for supporting it.

Before I talk about immigration, I do want to offer condolences for Agent Robert Smith. He died last week from injuries in a helicopter crash. He was a Customs and Border Protection agent. He reminds us, on a regular basis, that those who are on the frontline of protecting the country take danger for—as a part of their job. And therefore, we offer our deepest condolences for Robert Smith's family and his friends, and we ask for God's blessings on them.

Our Nation depends on our Federal agents to enforce our immigration laws at the border and across the country. In other words, you've got a big job to do. We're counting on you to enforce those laws. And when you graduate from FLETC, you're going to be an important part of that role. That's why you're here; it's to upgrade your skills so you have the capacity to do the job the country expects you to do. You're going to safeguard our ports of entry; you'll investigate workplace immigration violations; and you'll arrest those breaking the law. We are a nation of laws, and we expect people to keep the laws. And if they break the laws, there will be a consequence.

This administration of mine is committed to ensuring that our Federal agents have the resources you need to carry out your responsibilities. For some of the older hands here—and I'm not going to pick you out of the crowd—[laughter]—I'm sure you will tell

some of the younger folks that things have changed significantly over the past years. One way to measure how things have changed is, look at the budget. We've doubled the funding for border security since I took office. We now spend \$10 billion a year to protect this border. One commitment to the American people that we're serious about helping you do your job is to spend more money on the job. It's a way to measure whether or not our—we're meeting our words with commitment. And we are.

We've used additional money. People say, "What are you spending it on?" Well, we're expanding the number of Border Patrol agents from about 9,000 to 13,000, and by the end of—we have expanded it—and by the end of 2008, we're going to have 18,000 agents. We will have more than doubled the Border Patrol in a relatively quick period of time. We believe the more manpower is on the border, the more likely it is we'll be able to enforce the border, like the American people expect us to do.

We're investing in new technology; we're strengthening infrastructure. In other words, we've taken our duty seriously to protect the border of the United States of America. As a matter of fact, we take it so seriously that I asked the Governors to put some National Guard troops down there until our Border Patrol agents got trained.

And we're beginning to see some results. In this immigration debate, oftentimes people say, "Well, they're not doing anything to protect the border." Well, that's not—those folks just simply don't know what's going on. You do. Men and women who wear the uniform understands what's going on. There's a focused, concerted effort to enforce our border.

As a matter of fact, you can tell when the border is better defended because the number of arrests go down. In other words, when people know there's a consequence to trying to sneak across, there's less likely to be people sneaking across. Arrests have gone down by 27 percent over the past year on the southern border. That's a sign of progress. It should say to the American people that we're doing what the people expect us to do.

The new infrastructure is making a difference. The Predators make a difference.

The number of Border Patrol agents make a difference. I don't know if any of you spent time out in Artesia, New Mexico, if you're working for the Border Patrol, but I was impressed with boot camp. And they're training these Border Patrol agents to do the hard work that the American people expect them to do.

One of the problems we had prior to the administration addressing the problem was, we had what was called—what happened was called catch-and-release. So you had your Border Patrol working hard, finding somebody trying to sneak into our country illegally; they'd catch him; and then they say, "Well, you know, look, you need to come back for your hearing. We're going to let you out, but come back for your hearing." Well, the problem was, the people didn't want to come back for their hearing. They generally wanted to go work. And so they would just disappear.

And it discouraged our Border Patrol agents. I've talked to too many agents and heard too many stories about people saying, "Wait a minute; I'm tired of doing my job on the frontline of protecting the border only to have the people that I have stopped coming in meld into our society."

And so we worked with Congress, and we've got a lot of detention facilities now along the border. See, we didn't have space before. Now we do have space. And as a result, catch-and-release has virtually been eliminated. It sends a strong—getting rid of the catch-and-release program sends a strong signal to people: If you come to the country, we will find you, and we're going to send you home, so don't try to come in the first place.

In other words, we're working hard to enforce the border. And we're stepping up enforcement inside the country. I see a lot of ICE hats. These are the folks that are charged with making sure that people who knowingly hire somebody who's here illegally pays a price. In other words, part of making sure our country is a rule of law, we've got to have people enforce the law. It's against the law to hire somebody who is here illegally. That's the law. And we're training people here to make sure that they know how to enforce that law. And the message is—

the message to employers—if you're hiring somebody here that you know is illegal, we're going to—there's a consequence to be paid. That's what a nation that bases its system on rule of law does. And that's what we'll continue to do.

And ICE is active. Your folks are working hard. ICE investigations have led to more than 3,000 arrests for immigration violations since the beginning of this fiscal year, nearly 600 arrests for criminal violations, including fraud and identity theft, and nearly \$30 million in penalties against businesses that have violated the law.

We're working hard to enforce the border. In the immigration debate, you hear people say, "Well, they're not doing anything to enforce the border." They're wrong, and you know they're wrong. And I'm here to thank you for doing—for working as hard as you can.

And now we've got to build on the progress. It's important for our American citizens to understand that the immigration system is in desperate need for comprehensive reform. And Congress has a historic window to act. The system isn't working. Think about a system that encourages smugglers to stuff people in 18-wheelers, people that want to work, people that want to provide for their families. Think about a system in which there's tremendous document forgery.

You've got a person out here in south Georgia who needs somebody to help them on their farm. The person shows up with documents. They don't know whether they're real or not. There's a lot of forgery going on. We've got people—in my judgment, this isn't what America should be about. And yet the system is broken to the point where people are being used as human cargo, being exploited, simply because most want to come and provide for their families. Most are willing to do jobs Americans aren't doing. The system needs to be fixed.

I appreciate the Republicans and Democrats in the United States Senate, starting with Saxby Chambliss and Mel Martinez, who put politics aside and put courage first to work on a comprehensive bill. It takes a lot of courage in the face of some of the criticism in the political world to do what's right, not what's comfortable. And what's right is

to fix this system now before it's too late. And I thank you two for your courage.

And Carlos and Mike Chertoff spent a lot of time sitting with the Senators from both political parties. I don't know if you're tired of it, but a lot of Americans are simply tired of this endless political bickering, that we can't work together because it might make somebody else look good. I tried to change the system. It's not working. So I sent the two Secretaries in there with the Senators from both parties and said, okay, why don't we sit down and see if we can't figure something that's good for the country. Each side is going to have to give a little bit. Not everybody is going to get everything they want, but what matters more is fixing the problem now.

And we're making some progress. Most Americans—or many Americans say their primary concern is border security and ensuring that those who violate our laws face consequences. That's what you're hearing out there when you're listening to the debate.

Others say their chief concern is keeping this economy strong. There's a—a lot of employers need a legal way to fill jobs that Americans simply aren't doing. There's a lot of jobs here in Georgia that require people from—that are willing to do the work that Americans aren't doing. It's just the way it is.

You talk to your farmer friends or your nursery friends—I remember the peach grower, Saxby, that you sent over to the White House. He's there saying to me, "You've got to understand something, Mr. President. My business won't go forward unless I have some of these good people that are willing to work long hours in my peach orchard helping me harvest the crop." So a lot of people in this debate are concerned about getting a bill in place that will help keep the economy growing.

Others say their main concern is to bring hard-working, decent people out of the shadows of our society. All these concerns are part of the same issue, and it's important for American citizens to understand that the legislation now before Congress addresses them all as one. Our view is, is that you can't solve the problem unless you address all aspects

of the problem. We've tried to address immigration reform in the past by talking about only one aspect of immigration reform. To make it work, to address the concerns of the American people, there must be a comprehensive approach.

A lot of Americans are skeptical about immigration reform primarily because they don't think the Government can fix the problems. And my answer to the skeptics is, give us a chance to fix the problems in a comprehensive way that enforces our border and treats people with decency and respect. Give us a chance to fix this problem. Don't try to kill this bill before it gets moving. Give us a chance to make it easier for the folks who wear the uniform along our borders to do their job.

I believe the bill before Congress learns from the mistakes of the past. It is the best hope for lasting reform. If people are interested in fixing a system that's broken, this bill is the best hope to do so. It answers the longstanding concerns of the American people. It deserves widespread support. And I strongly back it.

If you're serious about securing our borders, it makes sense to support legislation that makes enforcement our highest priority, and that's what this bill does. For decades, we have not been in complete control of the borders, and many people have lost faith in our capacity to get control of the borders. I ask them to look at what's taken place over the past years, recent years. I wish they could talk to some of your Border Patrol friends and talk about the advances that have been made and the good work they're doing down there.

The first step to comprehensive reform must be to enforce immigration laws at the borders and at worksites across America, and this is what this bill does. For the skeptics who say that we're not concerned about border security or workplace enforcement, they need to read the bill. The bill prioritizes enforcing our laws at the border and saying to employers, we'll hold you to account for employing somebody who's here illegally—knowingly employing somebody who's here illegally.

This bill sets enforcement benchmarks that have got to be met before other aspects

of the comprehensive bill are triggered. In other words, there has to be certain accomplishments in place before other aspects of the bill come into being. And here are some of those markers: increasing the number of Border Patrol agents. In other words, we said we're going to double them; they've got to get doubled, until other aspects of the bill come into being. We're going to build miles of state-of-the-art fencing. We're going to improve surveillance with advanced technologies. We will do a better job of holding employers accountable for the workers they hire.

Most employers want to comply with the law. The peach grower wanted to comply with the law. Believe me, he's a law-abiding, decent man. His attitude is, why don't you help me verify the legal status of a potential employee, as opposed to holding me to account—which we will do, of course, if he knowingly hires somebody—give me a hand with the verification system.

And that's why we're going to promote tamper-resistant identification cards. In other words, if you're here working, you're going to have a card that you can't tamper with, that some document forger can't foist off as a document for somebody to come and pick peaches here in Georgia.

In other words, we've got a serious attempt in this bill, and a real attempt to do what a lot of Americans want us to do, and that's enforce the border. If you're serious about keeping our economy strong, it makes sense to support legislation that gives foreign workers a legal path to jobs in America. There are people doing jobs here Americans aren't doing.

The peach man said to me, he said, "I can't find somebody from my hometown who wants to pick peaches, but I can find somebody who wants to put food on their table for a family from Mexico," for example. It seems to me, it makes sense to give those people a chance to come and work here on a temporary basis. This bill says temporary; it means temporary. You'll be here for a number of years, and you'll go back home. That's what a temporary-worker plan does. In the meantime, it helps meet the needs of our economy.

This bill's going to—this aspect of the bill will allow Federal agents to focus on apprehending violent criminals and terrorists who are a threat to our country rather than people who want to work here. In other words, if you can come to our country on a temporary basis legally, you're not going to sneak across the border. Who wants to pay a *coyote* hundreds of dollars or thousands of dollars when you can walk across and say, "I'm going to have a temporary work—job here in this country, and here's my tamper-resistant card."

If you're interested in securing the border, wouldn't you rather have Border Patrol agents chasing down terrorists and gun runners and dope runners, as opposed to people who are coming to do jobs Americans aren't doing? A temporary-worker plan, that is truly temporary, is going to make it easier for us to enforce the border. Border enforcement and having a rational worker plan go hand-in-hand. And that's what the American people have got to understand.

A temporary-worker program will not begin until our border security measures are in place and until we have a reliable system for verifying employment eligibility. That's the way the bill works. Oh, I'm sure you've heard some of the talk out there about people defining the bill. It's clear they hadn't read the bill. They're speculating about what the bill says, and they're trying to rile up people's emotions. This is a good piece of legislation. It addresses the border security needs, and it addresses the employment needs of our country.

If you're serious about bringing hard-working illegal immigrants out of the shadows of our society, it makes sense to support legislation that will resolve their status, without animosity and without amnesty. Others—I don't—they estimate 11 to 12 million people have been here for some—quite awhile, who are in an underground in America. It's not right, as far as I'm concerned. That's not what this country stands for. I know there are some people out there hollering and saying, "Kick them out." That is simply unrealistic. It won't work.

There are some people saying, "Giving them automatic citizenship." I oppose that. It won't work. I don't think it makes any

sense to do that. Amnesty is forgiveness for being here without any penalties; that's what amnesty is. I oppose it. The authors—many of the authors of this bill oppose it. This bill is not an amnesty bill. If you want to scare the American people, what you say is, the bill is an amnesty bill. It's not an amnesty bill. That's empty political rhetoric, trying to frighten our fellow citizens. People in Congress need the courage to go back to their districts and explain exactly what this bill is all about in order to put comprehensive immigration reform in place.

Let me explain how it works. Under the bill, those who want to stay in our country who have been here can apply for a Z visa. At some point in time, those who are coming to work will get temporary-work visas. Those who have been here already can apply for a Z visa. To receive the visa, illegal workers must admit they violated the law and pay a meaningful penalty, pass a strict background check, hold a job, maintain a clean record, and eventually earn English—learn English. That's how it works.

It says, if you want to be here, here's what you have to do. There is a consequence for having broken the law. As a result of a recent Senate amendment, they have to pay back taxes if they haven't paid taxes too. You're working hard; you pay taxes. People who have been here in this country ought to pay taxes. That's what it says.

The hurdles to citizenship are going to be even higher. In other words, if somebody says, fine, I'll take my Z visa; I'm out of the shadows now; I've got an opportunity to not hide in America; I'll continue doing the work I'm doing; I'm going to keep my record clean; I'll pay the penalties necessary so I can stay here—that's what it says. But if you want to be a citizen, there's more hurdles. It says, the Z visa worker would first have to pay an additional fine. In other words, you have broken the law, and there's a consequence for breaking the law. That's what the bill says.

Secondly, you've got to return home to file an application for your green card. If you want to be a citizen, you pay a fine; you touch base—home to apply for a green card; and then you take your place behind those who

have played by the rules and have been waiting in line patiently to become a citizen.

This is a good bill. It recognizes that we've got to treat people with respect, and it also recognizes we're a nation of law. And as we go forward, the legislation creates a new system for admitting new immigrants to our country, people who want to come here legally. The system is going to reward applicants based upon skills and education, in addition to family ties, so we can ensure America continues to have the world's most talented workforce.

This legislation is also going to help newcomers assimilate into our society. One of the great aspects of American society is, people have been able to assimilate.

You know, I was at the Coast Guard Academy the other day, giving a speech there, and the president of the class, a Latino, talked with great pride in his voice about the fact that his grandfather was a migrant to the United States of America, and here he is addressing the Coast Guard Academy. I think it speaks volumes about the great promise of America. One of the reasons why is because his family assimilated into our society and into our culture. The key to unlocking the full promise of America is the ability to speak English. That's the language of our country. If you can speak English in this country and work hard and have dreams, you can make it. That's the great story of America. I believe it's true today like it was true yesterday as well.

We expect opportunities to help—we will expand opportunities to help new immigrants learn the language, learn about the ideals that make us a wonderful country. If you're serious about reform, it makes sense to support comprehensive legislation that addresses all aspects of the problem. You cannot solve the problem unless we address all aspects of the problem at the same time.

This reform is complex. There's a lot of emotions around this issue. Convictions run deep. Those determined to find fault with this bill will always be able to look at a narrow slice of it and find something they don't like. If you want to kill the bill, if you don't want to do what's right for America, you can pick one little aspect out of it; you can use it to frighten people. Or you can show leadership

and solve this problem once and for all, so the people who wear the uniform in this crowd can do the job we expect them to do.

Now is the time for comprehensive immigration reform. Now is the time for members of both political parties to stand up and show courage and take a leadership role and do what's right for America.

Thanks for letting me come by, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. at the Tom Steed Building. In his remarks, he referred to Connie L. Patrick, director, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center; and President Fidel Castro Ruz of Cuba. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on the Nomination of Robert B. Zoellick To Be President of the World Bank

May 30, 2007

The President. Good morning. I thank Secretary of Treasury Paulson for joining us today. I'm pleased to announce that I will nominate Bob Zoellick to be the 11th President of the World Bank.

Bob Zoellick has had a long and distinguished career in diplomacy and development economics. It has prepared him well for this new assignment. He is a committed internationalist. He has earned the trust and support of leaders from every region of the world. He is deeply devoted to the mission of the World Bank. He wants to help struggling nations defeat poverty, to grow their economies, and offer their people the hope of a better life. Bob Zoellick is deeply committed to this cause.

Since the end of the Second World War, the advance of trade and technology has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. Some call this globalization; I call it the triumph of human liberty, stretching across national borders. Every day, the expansion of trade creates tremendous new opportunities for people. Unfortunately, too many people are shut out from these opportunities, especially the nearly 1 billion men, women, and children who live on less than \$1 a day. Bob Zoellick understands that there are about 1

billion men, women, and children who live on less than \$1 a day, and he's committed to doing something about it.

The United States has a moral and national interest in helping poor and struggling countries transform themselves into free and hopeful societies. The job of the World Bank is to help reduce poverty and raise living standards in the poorest nations. The Bank does this by helping these nations strengthen good government, develop sound financial markets, uphold property rights, and combat corruption.

The United States is the Bank's largest donor. And the reason we are is because we believe that it is essential to help developing nations build growing economies that will provide jobs and opportunities for all their citizens.

Bob Zoellick brings a wealth of experience and energy to this task. Over the past three decades, he's held important posts in government, business, and higher education. And in these posts, he has worked on issues ranging from German unification, Latin American debt relief, to the transition of post-Soviet economies.

For the past 6 years—or most of the past 6 years, he has served as a member of my Cabinet. As the United States Trade Representative, he helped bring China and Taiwan into the World Trade Organization, launched the Doha round of trade talks at the WTO, and significantly increased the number of U.S. free trade agreements.

Bob has had a strong voice for Africa. He's helped implement the African Growth and Opportunity Act that has increased America's trade with that continent.

He has served on the board of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, an initiative designed to change the way we deliver foreign aid. In 2005, I asked Bob to serve as the Deputy Secretary of State. In that role, he managed a global staff of 57,000 people; he played a leading role in our engagement with China; and he traveled frequently to Darfur and southern Sudan to help find a path for peace. Most recently, he has been vice chairman international at Goldman Sachs. In short, it would probably be easier to list all the jobs Bob hasn't had.

This man is eminently qualified, and when he takes his place at the World Bank, he will replace another able public servant, Paul Wolfowitz. Paul is a man of character and integrity. Under his leadership, the World Bank increased its support for the world's poorest countries to a record \$9.5 billion in 2006. Half of this money goes to sub-Saharan Africa. It's home to some of the poorest folks. As Paul has helped steer more resources to these countries, he has instituted reforms designed to make sure that these resources are used wisely and achieve good results.

Paul took control over the World Bank at a critical moment. He's taken many steps to ensure that the Bank can meet the needs of developing nations in this new century. These steps include strengthening the Bank's role in combating malaria. These steps include establishing a rapid response in fragile-states policy to respond more quickly to nations recovering from crisis or war. These steps include the Clean Energy Investment Framework, a Bank initiative designed to help bring cleaner and more efficient technologies to developing countries.

In these and many other ways, Paul Wolfowitz has made the World Bank a more effective partner for development. I thank him for his dedication to the poor and his devotion to the good work of the World Bank.

Bob Zoellick is the right man to succeed Paul in this vital work. He's a leader who motivates employees. He builds a constituent support and focuses on achieving goals. I'm pleased that he has, once again, agreed to serve our country.

Congratulations.

[At this point, President-designate Zoellick made brief remarks.]

The President. Thanks, Bob. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President-designate Zoellick.

**Remarks on the President's
Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief**

May 30, 2007

Thank you all for coming. Welcome to the Rose Garden. Today I'm joined by some very determined people who are battling one of the worst epidemics of modern times, the spread of HIV/AIDS.

I want to thank you all for being here. I'm honored to be in your presence. And I want to thank others who are joining us in this important cause as well, starting with Ambassador Mark Dybul, who is the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator. He runs our PEPFAR initiative. Mark, thank you for being here, as well as Rajat Gupta, who is the chairman of the board of the Global Fight—Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Rajat, we're proud you're here.

He's told me something very interesting. Actually, he and I attended the same graduate school, and he said, "It's important for people who have been successful in the business world to contribute something back to society." And, Rajat, thank you for that spirit, and thank you for that compassion and concern.

Secretary Mike Leavitt is with us, the Department of Health and Human Services; Ambassador John Negroponte, Deputy Secretary of State. I'm about to make an important initiative. I appreciate my—the members of my administration for joining us to hear this initiative.

The U.S. and our citizens have tackled HIV/AIDS aggressively. Many HIV-positive Americans are able to lead productive lives. The story has been quite different elsewhere, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

When I took office, an HIV diagnosis in Africa's poorest communities was usually a death sentence. Parents watched their babies die needlessly because local clinics lacked effective treatments. The story of a mother of Kenya affected me deeply, when she couldn't afford drugs, except for one person in her family. So she forgave her own treatment to save her son. Despairing families who had lost everything to AIDS started to believe that they had been cursed by the Almighty God. This modern-day plague robbed Africa and other countries of the hope of progress

and threatened to push many communities toward chaos.

The United States has responded vigorously to this crisis. In 2003, I asked Congress to approve an emergency plan for AIDS relief. Our Nation pledged \$15 billion over 5 years for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care in many of the poorest nations on Earth. In the years since, thanks to the support of the United States Congress and the American people, our country has met this pledge. This level of assistance is unprecedented and the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease in human history.

This investment has yielded the best possible return: saved lives. To date, the emergency plan has supported treatment for 1.1 million people infected with HIV. This is a promising start, yet without further action, the legislation that funded this emergency plan is set to expire in 2008. Today I ask Congress to demonstrate America's continuing commitment to fighting the scourge of HIV/AIDS by reauthorizing this legislation now. I ask Congress to double our initial commitment and approve an additional \$30 billion for HIV/AIDS prevention, for care, and for treatment over the next 5 years.

This money will be spent wisely through the establishment of partnership compacts with host nations. These compacts would ensure that U.S. funds support programs that have the greatest possible impact and are sustainable for the future. America will work with governments, the private sector, and faith and community-based organizations around the world to meet measurable goals: to support treatment for nearly 2.5 million people; to prevent more than 12 million new infections; and to support care for 12 million people, including more than 5 million orphans and vulnerable children.

To help assess the progress we have made to date, Laura, the First Lady, is going to go to Africa next month. She's going to meet with community leaders and visit with participants in HIV/AIDS programs during her trip to Zambia, Senegal, Mali, and Mozambique. And she's going to come back with her findings. I really thank her for her concern about HIV/AIDS. She and I share a passion. We believe strongly that to whom much

is given, much is required. Much has been given the United States of America. Therefore, I believe strongly, as does she, that much is required of us in helping solve this problem.

The statistics and dollar amounts I've cited in the fight against HIV/AIDS are significant, but the scale of this effort is not measured in numbers. This is really a story of the human spirit and the goodness of human hearts. Once again, the generosity of the American people is one of the great untold stories of our time. Our citizens are offering comfort to millions who suffer and restoring hope to those who feel forsaken.

You know, one good example of this good work is supported by—that the U.S. supports is called the Coptic Hope Center in Nairobi, Kenya. Three years ago, the center had a staff of four people and resources to treat no more than five HIV/AIDS patients a day. Today, the staff consists of 40 people and 10 volunteers who provided care and treatment services to over 6,000 people. I want to thank the Director of the Hope Center, Bishop Paul, who's with us today. I want to thank you for being here. I want to thank you for your leadership and for your care for your fellow human beings.

Dr. Bill Pape is with us as well. Dr. Pape is an expert on infectious diseases and founded in Haiti a leading HIV treatment program, which is a major PEPFAR partner. Dr. Pape has shown that even in the most difficult circumstances, dedicated and caring people can make great progress in fighting HIV/AIDS. We're sure proud you're here, doc. Thanks for coming.

Also with us is Kunene Tantoh. Kunene is HIV-positive. She coordinates a mentoring program, supported by U.S. funds, for other mothers with HIV in Cape Town, South Africa. Kunene is proof that people with HIV can live productive lives and make a significant difference in the lives of others. Kunene, I want to thank you for joining us. Thank you for bringing Baron. Baron is 4 years old, and he's letting us know. *[Laughter]* We appreciate you all coming. Thank you for the example you have set.

Similar success stories are playing out all across the African continent, where victims of HIV/AIDS are finding new reservoirs of

strength and support. Villages in Africa now talk of the Lazarus effect, dying communities being brought back to life, thanks to the compassion of the American people. This is the impact that has made our emergency plan and the modern-day, good Samaritans who are implementing it so effective. It's important that we continue the work we have begun.

I'm honored that you were here today. I'm honored to be representing a nation that cares deeply about the suffering of others. I look forward to working with Congress on this great and noble effort.

May God bless you all. May God continue to bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:14 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jean W. Pape, director, Haitian Study Group on Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections; and Manyongo "Kunene" Mosima Tantoh, member, Mothers to Mothers-To-Be. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a New Jersey Republican Committee Reception in Edison, New Jersey

May 30, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Yes, it's good to be back in Jersey. Thank you for the warm welcome. I appreciate you all coming. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your kind remarks.

Audience members. We love you, Mr. President! We love you!

The President. Yes, well, last time I was in Jersey, there was a lot of heckling as well. *[Laughter]* Good heckling. *[Laughter]* I love you too. Thank you. Thanks for coming. Thank you for your enthusiasm. Thank you for supporting the Republican Party.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad to come and help you raise money so that you can achieve big things—first of all, taking those New Jersey houses in the November '07 election and laying the groundwork for an important election in '08. It is important that a Republican succeed me as President of the United States, and I thank you for supporting those efforts.

I want to thank all the grassroots activists who are here. One grassroots activist I've known for a long time is the senior chairman of the county chairmen here in the State of New Jersey, George Gilmore. He happens to be the chairman of the Ocean County Republican Party. And I want to thank all the other county chairmen who are here. And I want to thank all the people who put up the signs and make the phone calls and do all the hard work so that our candidates know that they're supported when they're out there seeking the vote.

I really appreciate you coming. I'm proud to be here with my friend Lew Eisenberg, former Republican National committeeman from New Jersey, and his wife, Judy. I thank Larry Bathgate, former finance chairman for the Republican National Committee. I want to say thank you to State Minority Leader Leonard Lance and Alex DeCroke of the State senate for serving—or actually, DeCroke is in the statehouse, and Lance is in the senate. And I appreciate them serving. And our job is to help you all become the majority leaders. And I think we've got a good chance to do it. The experts tell me that with hard work, there's a good chance that the statehouse and the State senate become Republican. And I'm glad to be a part of helping, and I want to thank you all for helping as well.

I want to thank you all for recognizing the fact that you've got the B team in the Bush family. The A team is across the river in New York City. Yes, that's Laura. She sends her love. I will tell you this: I'm a lucky man, when I asked her to marry me, and she said yes. A lot of her friends aren't so sure she's so lucky. *[Laughter]* But I am pleased to report she's doing well. She's a great First Lady, a great wife, and a great mom.

I believe you win elections by telling the people what you believe, not necessarily what they want to hear. And here are the things that we believe: We believe that the number-one priority of this country is to protect the people of the United States from further attack. And that's why we believe in a strong national defense. We believe in supporting those who are in the homeland defending this country, and we believe those who are defending it overseas.

We believe that we ought to trust people to make the decisions on how they run their lives, not trust the government. And the classic case of whether we trust people or not is when it comes to cutting taxes. If you believe in cutting taxes, it means you trust you to spend your money better than the government can.

We believe you've got to trust in the values of our citizens. We believe the role of government is to unleash the great compassion of America to help solve many of the problems that can only be solved through love and decency and care. That's what we believe. We believe that there is a role for government, but we believe the primary role for government is to empower our citizens to realize their God-given potential. And if we campaign on that message, and if we stick to those principles, and if we govern for what's right, not based upon the latest Gallup Poll, we will continue to lead this country.

I want to talk about our security and our economy. We are a nation at war. I wish I didn't have to say that, but that's the reality of the world in which we live. Now, I understand there's some good, decent people who disagree with that assessment. We're a country where people are free to express their views. Some people don't believe we're in war. I'm just not one of them. I believe that the role of the United States Government is to do everything we can to protect you from further attack.

You were affected by the September the 11th attacks a lot, and so was I. I vowed on that day that I would use all U.S. assets to do what was necessary to protect the American people. We're fighting an enemy that is cruel, an enemy that murders the innocent to achieve objectives. These folks just aren't isolated, angry people; these are ideologues; these are people that have got a set of beliefs. I would suggest that people, if they're trying to figure out what these people believe and their vision of the world, is just remember what life was like under the Taliban in Afghanistan—particularly if you were a woman or a young girl—you had no rights, no freedoms. If you expressed your belief, it was contrary to their view, you would be, at minimum, whipped in the public square. These people are brutal. They have no conscience.

They do want to spread their vision as far and wide as possible. They have a vision of establishing a caliphate. They hate the United States of America and what we stand for. They hate many of our friends, including Israel. The only way to deal with these people is to stay on the offense, fight them overseas so we don't have to fight them here at home.

And that's exactly what we've done. I vowed that this Nation wouldn't tire. I vowed that I would do everything I could to lead this Nation, to protect you. And since that fateful day that killed nearly 3,000 people, innocent people, this country has been on the offense. If we find them overseas, we'll bring them to justice. We're using everything in our power to get good intelligence. We've reformed homeland security. We're supporting those on the frontline of securing this country.

Oh, I know there's a big debate about how to deal with these folks. I will just tell you my view. You can't ration with them. You can't compromise with them. You can't hope for the best with them. You must treat them as they are—coldblooded killers—and bring them to justice before they hurt again.

One of the lessons of September the 11th is, we must confront threats before they come home to hurt us; that when we see a threat, we must deal with it—not always with the military, necessarily, but we've got to take threats seriously. We just can't hope that oceans will protect us from these people. They have strategies to impose their will. They want to cause enough harm to cause us to retreat in order for them to be able to impose their vision. These folks found safe haven and got help in Afghanistan. We gave them a chance to—the Government to turn them over. They refused, and so we removed the Taliban from power and thereby removed the ability for Al Qaida to plot and plan and attack again.

In Iraq, we faced a threat. He was an enemy of America, a person who had used weapons of mass destruction, and a person who was paying Palestinian—the family—Palestinian families of suicide bombers, a person who had harbored terrorists. I went to the United Nations, right across the river here. I said to the world, we face a common threat. The United Nations Security Council

agreed. We told Saddam Hussein with one voice, international voice, “Disarm, or face serious consequences.” It was his choice to make. He defied the demands of the free world. I made the decision that we would liberate the people of Iraq. Getting rid of Saddam Hussein made the world a better place.

And now the question is, will our country help these two struggling democracies succeed? See, the short-run strategy is to bring people to justice, is to keep the pressure on. The long-term strategy is to defeat their ideology with a more hopeful ideology, and that's the ideology based upon liberty. Free societies are societies that best answer the hopes and dreams of people. In the short term, we'll keep the pressure on the enemy. In the long term, we must confront the circumstances by which 19 people decided to get on airplanes and kill nearly 3,000 people on a brutal attack on the United States of America. And the stakes are high.

You know, I know that many of you people are deeply concerned about Iraq, and so am I. You see the carnage on your TV screens, and you wonder whether or not success is possible. I want to remind you that there has been pretty startling progress made in Iraq. After all, 12 million people went to the polls and supported a modern-day Constitution and voted for a free Government, which stands in stark contrast to life under a brutal tyrant who killed thousands of his own people.

And a knowing enemy realized there was being progress—progress was being made, and they want to stop it. Isn't it interesting, to determine the mindset of people who would want to stop the advance of a free society? Those are people we need to take seriously in this world.

Many of the spectacular bombings you see are inspired and done by Al Qaida. As General Petraeus said, public enemy number one in Iraq is Al Qaida. Public enemy number one in the United States of America is Al Qaida. We must defeat Al Qaida there so we don't have to face them here.

As you know, last fall, I made a decision about how we should conduct our affairs in Iraq. I had to choose between allowing the sectarian violence that was beginning to get

out of hand to continue to foster, or whether or not to put in more U.S. troops to try to quell that sectarian violence, to give this young democracy and its leaders a chance to make the decisions necessary for its society to move forward.

Now, I want to tell you—I want to share why I made the decision I made. I believe that if we allowed the sectarian violence to rage in that young democracy, it could create chaos, not only in the capital but throughout the country. I was deeply concerned that chaos would create a security vacuum into which radical and extremist elements would flow, many of which would have been fueled by outside forces. I was concerned that the chaos could spill out into other countries and destabilize governments. I was concerned that the message it would send to a country like Iran was that the United States of America couldn't be counted on. I was concerned that moderate people all throughout the Middle East would say, the United States doesn't keep its word. I was concerned that the enemy that wants to strike us again would be emboldened and would find more recruits. I was concerned that the chaos would be exactly what the enemy wants. And so I made a decision to put more troops in, as opposed to retreat.

And I believe this: No matter what the opinions of people in Washington may be, when we've got our troops in harm's way, they need all the support, they need all the support they can get from the U.S. Government.

This is hard work, but it is necessary work for the security of this country. What happens in Iraq matters to the security here at home. And I understand how hard it is. But I'll tell you what, this is an amazing country, when we produce men and women who fully understand the stakes of serving in the United States military in a time of danger. I am constantly amazed that people raise their right hand to wear the uniform of America, to do what is necessary to protect us. And I am proud to be their Commander in Chief.

You know, I tell people that one of the startling aspects of my Presidency has been that one of my really best friends as President was the Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Min-

ister Koizumi. I find it interesting—he was such a good friend. Remember, we went down to Elvis's place—[laughter]—in Memphis, and we had a wonderful trip. And by the way, his replacement, Prime Minister Abe, is a good friend too.

Isn't it amazing that my dad and many of your relatives fought the Japanese as a sworn enemy?

Audience member. This gentleman right here—[inaudible].

The President. Right there is one. Isn't that interesting that George H.W. Bush, young Navy fighter pilot, put his life on the line, along with a lot of other good folks, to fight the Japanese in a really bloody conflict? And some 60 years later, his son sits at the table with the Prime Minister of the former enemy, talking about helping this young democracy in Iraq survive, talking about making sure the leader of North Korea doesn't get a nuclear weapon, talking about keeping the peace.

Liberty has got the capacity to transform troubled regions into peaceful regions. It has got the capacity to help enemies become allies. In order to defeat the ideologies that murder the innocent to achieve their objectives, there must be an alternative ideology available. And we've got one for the world, and it's called freedom.

I firmly believe we'll succeed in doing the hard work if we do not lose our nerve. I believe—I firmly believe that the decisions I have made not only will help secure this country from further attack but will lay the foundation of peace for generations to come. I don't want it to be said, when the chaos were to spill out and the nuclear arms race may occur in the Middle East, that people will look back and say, "What happened to them in the year 2007? How come they couldn't see the impending danger?" I'm prepared to continue to lead this Nation and will lead this Nation for the next 20 months to make sure that we do the hard work necessary to secure this country from attack.

Our foreign policy, though, is much more than just military action and kinetic action in dealing with an enemy. Our foreign policy is one based upon the premise and the principle, to whom much is given, much is required. Today in the Rose Garden, I talked

about the great compassion of our American citizens when I announced that we were going to double our program to deal with HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa. You ask, "Why would you do that, Mr. President?" And the reason why it matters to help ease the suffering around the world is, what happens overseas matters to the security of the United States of America. Where you find disease and hunger and poverty, you find despair. And the danger is, that despair could turn into extremism, radicalism, to the point where people would be willing to come and kill to achieve political objectives.

I am so proud of the United States of America. I don't know if you know this or not, but 3 years ago, 50,000 people were receiving antiretroviral drugs on the continent of Africa. Thousands were dying, and a generation was in the process of being wiped out. And today, because of your generosity, 1.1 million people receive antiretroviral drugs, and we intend to double that number. The soul of America is enriched when we help those who need help. Whether it be feeding the hungry or fighting malaria or dealing with HIV/AIDS, the United States of America is in the lead.

And we're also the leader in the industrialized world when it comes to economic growth. This economy of the United States of America is strong. The unemployment rate is low; it's low in a State like New Jersey. We're adding new jobs. Inflation is down. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong. People are investing. People are making a living in this country.

You know, it wouldn't necessarily have been that way—you might remember the short-term economic history of the United States. A recession set in, in 2001. We had those terrorist attacks, which, of course, you remember here in New Jersey, vividly remember, which affected our economy. We had corporate scandals. We had a lot of hurdles in the way of economic vitality. But I think I made a decision that affected the economic future of the country when I worked with the United States Congress to cut the taxes on everybody who paid taxes in the United States.

The best way to keep this economy strong is to let you keep more of your own money

in your pocket. If you're interested in small-business growth, you let our small businesses keep money—more of the money they earn. If you want investment, you incent investment by cutting the taxes on investment. If you want a family to do well, you keep the child credit high. If you want to make sure you get—if you want marriage, you get rid of the marriage penalty. In other words, if you want the American people to do better, you cut the taxes, is what you do.

And that's exactly what we did. And now guess what's happening? The rhetoric in Washington is beginning to shift, as you know, and the Congress changed hands. And they submitted a budget up there.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. They submitted a new budget, and it's a throwback to the old days. They said, "We need more of your money, and therefore, oh, we're just going to tax a few of you." But that's not the way it works in Washington, DC. You can't sate their appetite for spending your money. The bunch in power in Congress now wants to raise your taxes as much as they possibly can because they think they can spend your money better than you can.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And that is why it's important for us to make sure those tax cuts we passed are permanent.

Oh, I know, look, you'll hear the same tired rhetoric. Listen, "We got to balance the budget by raising your taxes." But we've shown it is possible to balance the budget by keeping taxes low, keeping our economy strong, and being wise about how we spend your money.

You might remember, a while ago I said, we're going to cut the deficit in half over a period of time. Well, we did so quicker than anticipated—3 years quicker. And now we've submitted a new budget that shows how you can balance the budget by keeping taxes low, within 5 years. And here's the logic, and here's the reason behind such a philosophy: Low taxes encourages economic growth. Economic growth, it turns out, causes there to be more tax revenues coming into the Treasury. More tax revenues in the Treasury means you have more money to offset spending.

And so when you're wise about spending and you keep taxes low—growing the economy so we've got the revenues to spend—you end up balancing the budget. We've got plenty of money in Washington, DC. We need more money in your pockets so this economy continues to grow.

And I believe that if our candidates run on strong national defense and strong security, and I believe if our candidates say, we trust you to make your health care decisions, or we trust you to make rational decisions for your family, and we trust you with your own money, we'll keep the White House in 2008, that we can retake the statehouses across the country, and we can retake the Congress. Our philosophy is hopeful. Our philosophy is optimistic. And we have shown over this last 6 years, our philosophy works, for the good of the American people.

So that's what I've come to share with you. I hope out of this talk, you get a sense for my optimism about America's future. I believe there is no problem we can't solve when we put our mind to it. I believe that we are a country of determined, fine people, who are willing to do the hard work necessary to grow this economy and, at the same time, protect our country. I believe there are better days ahead for the American people.

I am proud to lead you. I am proud you're here. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:09 p.m. at the New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center. In his remarks, he referred to Tom Wilson, chairman, New Jersey Republican State Committee; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea.

Proclamation 8150—National Oceans Month, 2007

May 30, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation benefits from the oceans that contain precious natural treasures, carry much of our trade, and provide us with food and recreational opportunities. During Na-

tional Oceans Month, we celebrate these benefits, and we underscore our commitment to being good stewards of the oceans.

Since the release of my Ocean Action Plan in 2004, my Administration has made great strides in ocean conservation by working with State, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and our international partners in the spirit of cooperative conservation. In June 2006, I designated a national monument in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to celebrate the area's natural, cultural, and historical importance. The tropical waters of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument are a sanctuary for 7,000 marine species. This important Monument is our Nation's largest single conservation area and the largest protected marine area in the world. Earlier this year, I was also proud to sign into law the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 to end over-fishing and rebuild our Nation's fish stocks through more effective, market-based management. Internationally, we continue to lead in protecting the maritime environment while preserving the navigational freedoms essential to the security and prosperity of every nation. By working to build a well managed system of offshore aquaculture, we can provide a healthy source of food and reduce pressure on our ocean ecosystems.

During National Oceans Month and throughout the year, we recognize all who are dedicated to making our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes cleaner, healthier, and more productive, including the many Federal agencies that make up the Committee on Ocean Policy. One of these agencies, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, celebrates two centuries of dedicated research and conservation of coastal and marine environments. By continuing to work together, we can conserve and enjoy the splendor of these magnificent waters now and for generations to come.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 2007 as National Oceans Month. I call upon the people of the United States to learn more about the vital role oceans play in the life of our country

and ways we can conserve their many national treasures. I encourage all our citizens to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:52 a.m., June 1, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 31, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on June 4.

Remarks to the United States Global Leadership Campaign

May 31, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Laura, thanks for that short introduction. [*Laughter*] I'm proud to be introduced by my wife. I love her dearly. She's a great First Lady.

And I appreciate the chance to address the U.S. Global Leadership Campaign. This is a fine organization, and it's an important organization. It's rallying businesses and non-governmental organizations and faith-based and community and civic organizations across our country to advance a noble cause, ensuring that the United States leads the world in spreading hope and opportunity. It's a big deal, and I appreciate your participation.

It's a big deal because your efforts are needed. Millions suffer from hunger and poverty and disease in this world of ours. Many nations lack the capacity to meet the overwhelming needs of their people. Alleviating this suffer requires bold action from America. It requires America's leadership, and it requires the action of developed nations as well.

That's the message I'm going to take with me to Europe next week, when Laura and I go to the G-8. At that meeting I will discuss our common responsibility to help struggling nations grow strong and improve the lives of their citizens. And today I'm going to describe some of the initiatives that I will be discussing with world leaders next week to

help developing nations build a better future for their people.

Before I do so, I want to thank George Ingram, the president of the U.S. Global Leadership Campaign. I thank the members of my Cabinet who share the same passion I do for helping those less fortunate around the world—that would include Carlos Gutierrez, Department of Commerce; Secretary Mike Leavitt, Department of Health and Human Services; Secretary Sam Bodman at the Department of Energy; Administrator Steve Johnson of the EPA. Thank you all for coming. Proud to be serving with you.

I am glad that the Acting Director of the U.S. Foreign Assistance and Acting Administrator of USAID is here, Henrietta Fore. Thanks for coming. I appreciate John Danilovich, who is the head of the Millennium Challenge Corporation; Rob Mosbacher, the head of OPIC. I appreciate other members of my administration who joined us today.

I thank the members of the diplomatic corps who are here today. I thank the members of the U.S. Global Leadership Campaign.

We are a compassionate nation. When Americans see suffering and know that our country can help stop it, they expect our Government to respond. I believe in the timeless truth, and so do a lot of other Americans, to whom much is given, much is required. We're blessed to live in this country. We're blessed to live in the world's most prosperous nation. And I believe we have a special responsibility to help those who are not as blessed. It is the call to share our prosperity with others and to reach out to brothers and sisters in need.

We help the least fortunate across the world because our conscience demands it. We also recognize that helping struggling nations succeed is in our interest. When America helps lift societies out of poverty, we create new markets for goods and services and new jobs for American workers. Prosperity abroad can be translated to jobs here at home. It's in our interest that we help improve the economies of nations around the world.

When America helps reduce chaos and suffering, we make this country safer, because prosperous nations are less likely to feed resentment and breed violence and export terror. Helping poor nations find the path to success benefits this economy and our security, and it makes us a better country. It helps lift our soul and renews our spirit.

So America is pursuing a clear strategy to bring progress and prosperity to struggling nations all across the world. We're working to increase access to trade and relieve the burden of debt. We're increasing our assistance to the world's poorest countries and using this aid to encourage reform and strengthen education and fight the scourge of disease. We'll work with developing nations to find ways to address their energy needs and the challenge of global climate change.

Bringing progress and prosperity to struggling nations requires opening new opportunities for trade. Trade is the best way to help poor countries develop their economies and improve the lives of their people. When I took office, America had free trade agreements with three countries. Today, we have free trade agreements in force with 14 countries, most of which are in the developing world. Three weeks ago, my administration and Congress agreed on a new trade policy that will be applied to free trade agreements with Peru, Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. And I look forward to working with Congress to get all these trade bills passed. These bills are good for our economy.

But it's important for Members of Congress and the people of this country to understand, free trade is the best way to lift people out of poverty. And so the United States also seeks to open markets to the Doha round of trade negotiations. Doha represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to help millions in the developing world rise from poverty and despair. If you're interested in helping the poor people, you ought to be for trade and opening up markets for their goods and services. And the Doha round gives us an opportunity to do just that.

We put forward bold proposals to help conclude a successful Doha round. And at the G-8 summit next week, I'm going to urge other nations to do the same. A successful

Doha round will benefit all our countries, and it's going to transform the world.

I know that trade can transform lives; I've seen it firsthand. Laura and I were recently in Guatemala. We went to a small village and saw what can happen when markets are open for local entrepreneurs. In this case, we met some farmers who for years had struggled to survive, worked hard just to put food on the table for their families by growing corn and beans. That's all they were able to do. It's a hard way to make a living, growing corns and beans. When we negotiated the trade agreement called the CAFTA-DR, which opened up new markets for Guatemalan farmers, the entrepreneurial spirit came forth. There are entrepreneurs all over the world. If just given a chance, they can succeed.

Today, the farmers in that village are growing high-value crops because they have new markets in which to sell their product. The business we met—the entrepreneur we met now employs 1,000 people. Trade will improve lives a lot faster than government aid can. It's in our interest that we open up markets for our products and for the products of others. People just want to be given a chance. And the United States will take the lead in making sure those markets are open for people to be able to realize a better life.

Building progress and prosperity to struggling nations requires lifting the burden of debt from the poorest countries. That makes sense. It doesn't take a Ph.D. in economics to figure out, if you're paying a lot of money on interest, you're not having enough money to support your own people. In the past, many poor nations borrowed money, and they couldn't repay the debt. And their interest payments were huge. And therefore, they didn't have the opportunity to invest in education and health care. So the administration, my administration worked with G-8 nations to ease the debt burden. We're not the first administration to have figured this out. My predecessor did the same thing because it's the right policy for the United States of America.

Two years ago at Gleneagles, the G-8 nations agreed to support a multilateral debt relief agreement that freed poor countries of up to \$60 billion in debt. This year, we built

on that progress when the Inter-American Development Bank approved another debt relief initiative for some of the poorest nations in our neighborhood, in our own hemisphere. This initiative will cancel \$3.4 billion owed by five countries: Bolivia, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua. And that represents more than 12 percent of their combined GDP, an average of nearly \$110 for every man, woman, and child in these countries. And this money is now free to help these nations invest in improving their lives of citizens. It makes sense to forgive debt. If you're interested in helping the poor, it makes sense for the developed world to forgive the debt. And that's what the United States will continue to do.

Bringing progress and prosperity to struggling nations requires increased American assistance to countries most in need. Since I took office, we have more than doubled U.S. development spending across the world—from about \$10 billion in 2000 to \$23 billion in 2006. It's the largest increase in development assistance since the Marshall plan.

The first 4 years of my administration, we doubled our assistance to Africa. At the G-8 summit in 2005, I promised our assistance to Africa would double once again by 2010. I made a promise to the people. People expect us to deliver on that promise, and I expect the Congress to help. We must not shortchange these efforts. Congress needs to approve my full funding request for development assistance this year. We need to get the job done.

We're focusing increased American assistance for developing nations on three key goals. In other words, we have some goals; we're not just going to spend money. We have a reason to spend the money, and we expect there to be results when we spend that money, and so do the taxpayers of this country. It's one thing to be compassionate; it's another thing to be accountable for the money.

First, we're going to use our aid to help developing countries build democratic and accountable institutions and strengthen their civil societies. To succeed in the global economy, nations need fair and transparent legal systems, need free markets that unleash the creativity of their citizens, need banking sys-

tems that serve people at all income levels, and a business climate that welcomes foreign investment and supports local entrepreneurs.

The United States is helping developing nations build these and other free institutions through what we call the Millennium Challenge Account. Under this program, America makes a compact with developing nations. We give aid, and in return they agree to implement democratic reforms, to fight corruption, to invest in their people—particularly in health and education—and to promote economic freedom. Seems like a fair deal, doesn't it—taxpayers' money from the United States in return for the habits and procedures necessary for a solid society to develop. We don't want to give aid to a country where the leaders steal the money. We expect there to be accountability for U.S. money, and that's the principle behind the Millennium Challenge Account. Eleven nations have compacts in place worth nearly \$3 billion. And now 14 additional nations are eligible to negotiate compacts with the Millennium Challenge Corporation, headed by Ambassador Danilovich.

Let me give you an example of how this program can make a difference. In Madagascar, the leaders of this island nation set a goal in their compact to improve agricultural production. In other words, we work with a nation; they have set the goal; we support their goal. They want their farmers to be able to compete in the global marketplace. We agreed to help by investing in agricultural business centers that work with local farmers. In one village, this initiative helped a group of farmers who were surviving by collecting firewood and producing charcoal. That's how these folks were trying to get ahead. They'd find firewood and make charcoal out of it and hope they could find a market. It's a tough way to make a living in a modern world.

The business center that the compact established helped the farmers work together to identify a new product, a natural oil used in skin care products. I probably could use some of that myself here. *[Laughter]* The center helped these farmers develop—helped them to develop a business plan. They acquired financing to set up a distilling plant.

They built relationships with buyers in their nation's capital.

Before America and Madagascar signed our compact, a typical farmer in this village could earn about \$5 a week selling charcoal. After 2 months of bringing the new product to the market, the livelihood of these farmers increased. One farmer was able to raise his income enough to save about \$500, money he plans to use for a child's education.

We're going to help encourage African entrepreneurs in other ways as well. Today I'm announcing a new project called Africa Financial Sector Initiative. Through this initiative, we'll provide technical assistance to help African nations strengthen their financial markets. The U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corps, OPIC, headed by Rob Mosbacher, will work with the financial community to create several new private equity funds that will mobilize up to a billion dollars of additional private investment in Africa.

If you're interested in job creation, there's got to be capital available. It's in our interest that we help provide capital to African entrepreneurs. We want them to find access to capital, and we want them to have access to markets because we want to improve their lives. And when people's lives in countries on the continent of Africa improve, it helps the United States of America. It's what our taxpayers have got to understand. It's in our interests.

All this will go for naught if people don't have a good education. So the second way we're using our aid is to improve education so that the young in the developing world have the tools they need to realize their God-given potential. Many parents across the world either have no access to education for their children or simply cannot afford it. It's a fact of life, something the world needs to deal with, particularly those of us who have got some money.

In many nations, girls have even less educational opportunity. It robs them of a chance to satisfy their ambitions or to make use of their talents and skills, and it's really sad, when you think about it. It really is. The question is, does the United States care? Should we do something about it? And the answer is, absolutely. If boys and girls in Africa and other developing nations don't learn

how to read, write, and add and subtract, this world is just going to move on without them. And all the aid efforts we'll be trying will go to naught, in my judgment.

And so in 2002, I launched the African Education Initiative to help address the great need. Through this initiative, we have provided about \$300 million to expand educational opportunities throughout the continent, and we're going to provide another \$300 million by 2010. We will have doubled our commitment.

One young woman who has benefited from this program is a woman named Evelyn Nkadori from the Maasai people of the grasslands of Kenya. In her rural community, girls are rarely offered an education, just never given a chance. They're expected to care for younger children until they're married themselves at an early age. That was the custom. She had a different vision for her future, and our initiative helped her realize it. Our program helped her complete high school, and now she's attending Chicago State University on a scholarship. She is one of the first women from her village ever to receive a college education. She hopes to attend medical school and then go home and help others.

Evelyn, I appreciate you being here today. I'm honored in your presence. Thank you for your courage. We can't make you want to succeed, but we can help you succeed. Thanks for coming.

And we need to do more, for not only children on the continent of Africa but poor children throughout the world. And so I'm calling on Congress to fund \$525 million over the next 5 years to make our educational initiatives even more robust. And the goal is to provide basic education for 4 million additional children on the continent of Africa and across the globe.

We've got another interesting idea, and that is to establish new Communities of Opportunity centers in poor nations to provide skills and language training for 100,000 at-risk youth. Giving these young people in these countries the skills they need to succeed, we're going to give them keys to a brighter future.

The third way we're using our aid is to fight the scourge of disease in Africa and other parts of the developing world.

Epidemics like HIV/AIDS and malaria destroy lives, and they decimate families. They also impose a crippling economic burden on societies where so many are struggling to lift their families out of poverty. We've taken action to fight these diseases. We've done so because it's in our Nation's interest to do so.

In 2003, my administration launched a new initiative to combat HIV/AIDS, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR. We pledged \$15 billion over 5 years for AIDS prevention and treatment and care programs in many of the poorest nations on Earth. This level of support was unprecedented. I'm proud to report, on behalf of our citizens, that it remains the largest commitment by any nation ever to combat a single disease.

And the program is working. Three years ago, about 50,000 people on the continent of Africa were receiving antiretroviral drugs for help. Today, over 1.1 million people are receiving lifesaving drugs. And this is a good start. It's a necessary start, and it's a promising start, but we need to do more. So yesterday in the Rose Garden, Kunene and Baron and the good doc—and I don't know where the Bishop is—[laughter]—anyway, they were standing with me up there when I called on Congress to greatly expand our efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS, by doubling our initial commitment, by dedicating an additional \$30 billion to this struggle over the next 5 years in the year 2009.

And here's the goal: support treatment for nearly 2.5 million people, to prevent more than 12 million new infections, and to provide compassionate care for 12 million people, including 5 million more orphans and vulnerable children. We set the goal for the past initiative, and we met it. And we're going to set the goal for this one, and we're going to meet it. But Congress needs to get that money as quickly as possible so it makes it easier to meet the goal. I proposed this unprecedented investment for a reason; it's in the world's interest and our Nation's interest to save lives. And that's exactly what this program is doing.

We saved a life of a fellow named Robert Ongole. He's with us today. John Robert Ongole—not yet, not yet, John Robert. [Laughter] I'm going to make it a little more

dramatic than that. [Laughter] You probably didn't know who I was talking about when I skipped the "John." [Laughter]

John Robert has a family of two children; he has HIV/AIDS. This disease ravaged his body. His weight dropped to 99 pounds. He developed tuberculosis and other health problems. He and his family felt certain that he would die. Then John Robert began receiving antiretroviral treatment through PEPFAR in Uganda. His treatment restored his strength. He returned to the classroom, and he continued being a dad.

John Robert is earning his bachelor's degree in education. He's volunteering to help other people. The American people need to hear what he had to say: "When you talk of PEPFAR, that's my life because it worked. Because without it, I couldn't have lived. Now I want to save the lives of other people." Thanks for coming, John Robert.

Does it matter to America if John Robert lives? You bet it does. That's why this initiative is an important initiative. That's why it's important Congress continue to spend taxpayers' money to save lives like John Robert's and Kunene's and Baron's.

As we increase our commitment to fight HIV/AIDS, we're also continuing an unprecedented commitment to fight against malaria. Malaria takes the lives of about one million people a year in the developing world, and the vast majority are under 5 years old. In some countries, this disease takes even more lives than HIV/AIDS. Every 30 seconds, a mother in Africa loses her child to malaria. It's a tragic disease because it's preventable and treatable. We can do something about it.

In 2005, I announced the President's Malaria Initiative. Through this initiative, we're spending \$1.2 billion over 5 years to fight the disease in 15 targeted African countries. This initiative provides insecticide-treated bed nets, indoor spraying, and lifesaving anti-malaria medications. This strategy works. It really isn't all that complicated. It takes money and organization and effort.

In Angola, this initiative helped increase the number of children protected by nets from less than 5 percent to nearly 70 percent. You buy the nets; you educate the people; and you get the nets to them. And when they

start using them, lives are saved. This initiative has expanded malaria protection for more than 6 million Africans in its first year, and by the end of the second year, in 2007, we expect to reach a total of 30 million people.

At the G-8 summit, I'm going to urge our partners to join us in this unprecedented effort to fight these dreaded diseases. America is proud to take the lead. We expect others to join us as well. If you want to help improve lives on the continent of Africa and around the world, join with the United States and provide substantial help to fight HIV/AIDS and malaria.

Bringing progress and prosperity to struggling nations requires growing amounts of energy. It's hard to grow your economy if you don't have energy. Yet, producing that energy can create environmental challenges for the world. We need to harness the power of technology to help nations meet their growing energy needs while protecting the environment and addressing the challenge of global climate change.

In recent years, science has deepened our understanding of climate change and opened new possibilities for confronting it. The United States takes this issue seriously. The new initiative I am outlining today will contribute to the important dialog that we—will take place in Germany next week. The United States will work with other nations to establish a new framework on greenhouse gas emissions for when the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

So my proposal is this: By the end of next year, America and other nations will set a long-term global goal for reducing greenhouse gases. To help develop this goal, the United States would convene a series of meetings of nations that produce the most greenhouse gas emissions, including nations with rapidly growing economies like India and China.

In addition to this long-term global goal, each country would establish midterm national targets and programs that reflect their own mix of energy sources and future energy needs. Over the course of the next 18 months, our nations would bring together industry leaders from different sectors of our economies, such as power generation and al-

ternative fuels and transportation. These leaders will form working groups that will cooperate on ways to share clean energy technology and best practices.

It's important to ensure that we get results, and so we would create a strong and transparent system for measuring each country's performance. This new framework would help our nations fulfill our responsibilities under the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change. The United States will work with all nations that are part of this convention to adapt to the impacts of climate change, gain access to clean and more energy-efficient technologies, and promote sustainable forestry and agriculture.

The way to meet this challenge of energy and global climate change is through technology, and the United States is in the lead. The world is on the verge of great breakthroughs that will help us become better stewards of the environment. Over the past 6 years, my administration has spent, along with the Congress, more than \$12 billion in research on clean energy technology. We're the world's leader when it comes to figuring out new ways to power our economy and be good stewards of the environment.

We're investing in new technologies to produce electricity in cleaner ways, including solar and wind energy, clean coal technologies. If we can get a breakthrough in clean coal technologies, it's going to help the developing world immeasurably and, at the same time, help protect our environment.

We're spending a lot of money on clean, safe nuclear power. If you're truly interested in cleaning up the environment or interested in renewable sources of energy, the best way to do so is through safe nuclear power. We're investing in new technologies that transform the way we fuel our cars and trucks. We're expanding the use of hybrid and clean diesel vehicles and biodiesel fuel.

We're spending a lot of your money in figuring out ways to produce ethanol from products other than corn. One of these days, we'll be making fuel to power our automobiles from wood chips, to switch grasses, to agricultural wastes. I think it makes sense to have our farmers growing energy, so that we don't have to import it from parts of the world

where they may not like us too much. And it's good for our environment as well.

We're pressing on with battery research for plug-in hybrid vehicles that can be powered by electricity from a wall socket, instead of gasoline. We're continuing to research into advance hydrogen-powered vehicles that emit pure water instead of exhaust fumes. We're taking steps to make sure these technologies reach the market, setting new mandatory fuel standards that require 35 billion gallons of renewable and alternative fuels by the year 2017. It's a mandatory fuel standard. We want to reduce our gasoline consumption by 20 percent over the next 10 years, which will not only help our national security, it will make us better stewards of the environment. The United States is taking the lead, and that's the message I'm going to take to the G-8.

Last week, the Department of Energy announced that in 2006, our carbon emissions decreased by 1.3 percent while our economy grew by 3.3 percent. This experience shows that a strong and growing economy can deliver both a better life for its people and a cleaner environment at the same time.

At the G-8 summit, I'm going to encourage world leaders to increase their own investments in research and development. I'm looking forward to working with them. I'm looking forward to discussing ways to encourage more investment in developing nations by making low-cost financing options for clean energy a priority of the international development banks.

We're also going to work to conclude talks with other nations on eliminating tariffs and other barriers to clean energy technologies and services by the end of year. If you are truly committed to helping the environment, nations need to get rid of their tariffs, need to get rid of those barriers that prevent new technologies from coming into their countries. We'll help the world's poorest nations reduce emissions by giving them government-developed technologies at low cost or, in some case, no cost at all.

We have an historic opportunity in the world to extend prosperity to regions that have only known poverty and despair. The United States is in the lead, and we're going to stay in the lead.

The initiatives I've discussed today are making a difference in the lives of millions; our fellow citizens have got to understand that. We're talking about improving lives in a real, tangible way that ought to make our country proud. That's why we've asked these folks to come. It's one thing for the President to be talking about stories; it's another thing for the people to see firsthand what our help has done.

I'm so proud of the United States of America. This initiative shows the good character and the decency of the American people. We are a decent people. We feel responsible for helping those who are less fortunate. And I am proud to be the President of such a good nation.

Thanks for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Manyongo "Kunene" Mosima Tantoh, member, Mothers to Mothers-To-Be, and her son, Baron; Jean W. Pape, director, Haitian Study Group on Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections; and Bishop Paul, director, Coptic Hope Center. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Jalal Talabani of Iraq

May 31, 2007

President Bush. It is my honor to welcome the President of a free Iraq back to the Oval Office. President Talabani, thank you for coming. I admire your courage. I admire your dedication to a united Iraq. I admire the leadership you have shown. And I welcome you.

We had a good conversation today about a variety of subjects. I told the President that I'm fully committed to helping the Iraqi Government achieve important objectives—we call them benchmarks—political law necessary to show the Iraqi citizens that there is a unified government willing to work on the interest of all people.

The President fully understands the need for the Iraqi Government to meet certain benchmarks, and he is dedicated to achieving

those benchmarks. We're working very hard, for example, on getting an oil law with an oil revenue sharing code that will help unite the country. Working very hard on de-Ba'athification law and on reform, as well as Provincial elections.

We talked about a lot of issues. And I want to thank you very much for your vision, Mr. President, and your willingness to take the hard steps necessary to get the job done.

I told the President the decision I have made—I've asked one of my top aides, Meghan O'Sullivan, to return to Baghdad. Meghan has been an integral part of our team here at the White House. She has been in Iraq before. She's going back to serve with Ambassador Crocker, to help the Iraqis and to help the Embassy help the Iraqis meet the benchmarks that the Congress and the President expect to get passed. And I want to thank Meghan for her dedicated service to a free Iraq.

Mr. President, it is important that you succeed. Failure in Iraq would endanger the American citizens because failure in Iraq would embolden the enemies of a free Iraq. David Petraeus said, public enemy number one in Iraq is Al Qaida. Al Qaida happens to be public enemy number one in America too. And that should say loud and clear to citizens who still remember the lessons of September the 11th that it's in our interest to help the Iraqis defeat Al Qaida.

We must not let Al Qaida have a safe haven in Iraq. We must not retreat in the face of the unspeakable violence that they perpetuate on your citizens. We must help you prevail. And if all Iraqis showed the same courage you showed, we will prevail. And there's a lot of a—courageous Iraqis there.

I'm confident we can succeed, Mr. President. And I want to thank you for coming here to the White House to join me.

President Talabani. I'm pleased and honored to meeting our great friend, whom we consider the hero of liberating Iraq, President George Bush, who was always with Iraqi people. And also, I must tell you that I'm committed, as the President of Iraq, to benchmarks and to do our best to achieve some progress forward for national reconciliation, for passing the law—oil law, de-Ba'athification, and investment and other

laws which are now under discussion. And I think we are due to finish all of it and send it to Parliament to be achieved.

At the same time, we are committed to do our best to train our army and armed forces to replace, gradually, the American forces in taking responsibility of the security of our country. Of course, we are very grateful to the American people. And I present my condolences to the sacrifice which these glorious people America has always presented for liberating peoples all over the history and for Iraqi people and—[inaudible]—people and others.

We are always repeating our desire to strengthen the unity of Iraq and the unity of the National Government and to have the collective leadership in Iraq for dealing the oil problems. And I briefed his excellency, Mr. President, about what we have done and what we have achieved for this purpose.

I'm glad to have the support of President Bush and the Congress. I'm grateful to Congress. I told President Bush that I'm grateful for the Congress for the last decision and for the—[inaudible]—decision, which was the resolution that was taken by Congress, the resolution of liberating Iraq at the time of President Bill Clinton.

So we are determined to success. Of course, you have problems. I don't think that everything is okay, everything is good, we have no problems—no, we have problems. We have serious problems with terrorism. The main enemy of Iraqi people is Al Qaida and terrorists cooperating with them. But there are groups who are now raising arms against us. Now we are negotiating with them to give them back to the political process of the Iraqi people. And you have good achievements also. We hope that this will lead to more big steps forwards to national reconciliation in Iraq.

We are also determined to improve our political and economic life in Iraq. We achieved—unfortunately, media only concentrating on negative sides of Iraq. They are not concentrating on big achievements in Iraq, economic achievements, raising the salaries of the millions of Iraqis, improving the social life and the—that all universities, schools, hospitals are working well in Iraq. Besides the problems which we have—we

don't deny it—we are trying to overcome these difficulties. But we have some achievements. Thanks to the United States of America and our great friend President Bush, we achieved some good, important success.

Besides some failure in the security, we have also successes in bringing democracy for the first time to Iraq. All kinds of democratic rights are now available for Iraqi people. We have free election. We have now Parliament elected by people. We have authorities—Presidency, Prime Minister—chosen by the people. This is happening for the first time in the history of Iraqi people.

Also, we have some kind of success in rebuilding our country. Not all parts of Iraq are terrible areas. You have in the north of Iraq, Kurdistan. [*Inaudible*]*—*in Iraq is living in peace, security, and prosperity. And also, in the south, you have about nine Provinces now secure and gradually—days ago, the American forces delivered the responsibility of security to the authorities in the Iraqi Kurdistan. So we are going forward, with difficulties—I don't deny difficulties; I don't deny short—[*inaudible*]*—*I don't deny that still we are suffering from some problems. But we are determined to benchmarks, and we are determined to go forward and to achieve, as Mr. President mentioned.

Now we are due to end the oil law, which will revolutionary for all Iraqis, due to review the de-Ba'athification. We have our new draft for this. We have another proper draft for investment. We are encouraging investment from outside to Iraq. And we are going to renew the local elections—shall in new—in near future for this country.

And again, I am grateful to American people, to the President of the American people, for what they have done for my people, for Iraq. We are now living in much better situation than we had in the past. And we are facing common enemy, which is still a reason—Al Qaida is the enemy not only of Iraq and America but all people of the world. Look to the Arab countries, everywhere, Al Qaida—in Lebanon, in Niger, in Morocco, in Saudi Arabia, in Egypt—Al Qaida is starting to work against all peoples of Middle East. So we are fighting this enemy. And as President Bush said, there must be no place for Al Qaida in Iraq or in other places, be-

cause if they can have such a kind of bases, they will threaten Europe and the United States of America.

Again, Mr. President, thank you very much for your kind visit and for your important words you say.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. President Talabani referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Proclamation 8151—Black Music Month, 2007

May 31, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During Black Music Month, we recognize the outstanding contributions that African-American singers, composers, and musicians have made to our country, and we express our appreciation for the extraordinary music that has enriched our Nation.

The music of African-American musicians has helped shape our national character and become an important part of our musical heritage. Often born out of great pain and strong faith, that music has helped African Americans endure tremendous suffering and overcome injustice with courage, faith, and hope. By speaking to the human experience and expressing heartfelt emotion, African-American artists have inspired people across the generations in America and around the world with their vision and creativity.

This month is an opportunity to honor the men and women who have created some of the best music America has ever produced. Great musical talents such as Ray Charles, Louis Armstrong, Mahalia Jackson, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, and James Brown have enriched our culture with innovative talent and artistic legacies that continue to influence musicians today. We remember so many wonderful artists and celebrate the

achievements of black musicians whose work reflects the diversity of our citizens and lifts the human spirit.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2007 as Black Music Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the history of black music and to enjoy the great contributions of African-American musicians.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:52 a.m., June 1, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on June 4.

Proclamation 8152—National Child's Day, 2007

May 31, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Today's children are tomorrow's leaders, and our Nation has a responsibility to ensure that they develop the character and skills needed to succeed. On National Child's Day, we underscore our commitment to our children and pledge to provide them with the care, protection, and education they deserve.

Children are great blessings in our lives. They rely on the love and guidance of parents, family members, mentors from faith-based and community organizations, and teachers to help them gain a sense of confidence and learn that their actions have consequences. All of us play an important role in teaching our children that the decisions they make today will affect them for the rest of their lives.

My Administration is committed to helping young Americans reach their full potential. One of my top priorities is to reauthorize

the No Child Left Behind Act, a good law that has brought great progress. Students are scoring higher and beginning to close the achievement gap, proving that when we set expectations high, America's schools and students will rise to meet them. My Administration is also ensuring that our country is competitive by enhancing math and science education through the American Competitiveness Initiative. Additionally, the Department of Health and Human Services and its partners are working to prevent childhood obesity by encouraging America's youth to exercise and practice healthy eating habits. And the Helping America's Youth initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, raises awareness about the challenges that face our young people and motivates caring adults to connect with children in three key areas: family, school, and community. We will continue to work to provide a safe environment and a quality education for our Nation's boys and girls to ensure that they are prepared to lead lives of purpose and success.

On National Child's Day and throughout the year, we are grateful for young Americans and those who support them. Through a loving commitment to America's youth, we can create a more hopeful society, build a bright future for our country, and encourage our children to achieve their dreams.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 3, 2007 as National Child's Day. I call upon our citizens to celebrate National Child's Day with the appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also urge all Americans to dedicate time and energy to educating our youth and providing them with a safe and caring environment.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:55 a.m., June 4, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 5.

Interview With Foreign Print Journalists

May 31, 2007

The President. First, I'm really looking forward to the trip. It's a chance for me to see old friends, make new friends, and talk about an agenda that is based upon freedom and the obligation, for those of us who benefit from our free societies, to help less fortunate people.

Obviously, the G-8 is going to be the center point of the visit; it will be where the most focus is. But I take my bilateral visits very seriously. We're starting in the Czech Republic; I'm looking forward to seeing the President and the Prime Minister. That's my third trip? Second trip? Second trip. It's a beautiful city.

Besides my bilateral meetings with the leadership, I am looking forward to my democracy speech. Vaclav Havel has asked me to come and speak to a democracy forum. I feel very strongly that the United States must take the lead in promoting democracy around the world—even in places where it may not look like it could—that it's very hospitable because I believe, ultimately, it is hospitable. And so it's going to be an important speech, and I'm working on it.

And then, of course, I go to Germany for the G-8. I've been in that beautiful part of your country before. I'm looking forward to the seaside resort. Of course, I'm anxious to see the Chancellor. She and I have got a very strong relationship. I don't know if you know this or not, but we do visit via secure video on a fairly regular basis. I've had some—you know, a lot of meaningful conversations with her, other than by phone.

And then the G-8, it's going to be an important meeting, just like all G-8s are. And this year I'll be talking about the need for all of us to work together to deal with HIV/AIDS and malaria and education. And, of course, global climate change will be an issue as well.

And then we'll go on to Poland. I'm looking forward to going back—for my third time; twice in Czech Republic, third time in Poland. Of course, part of the discussions with both countries will be on missile defense. I'll be glad to answer any questions you have

on that. It's just an important issue for us to discuss, and it's an important for me to allay people's fears.

My friend Vladimir Putin is making this to be a case where somehow this is going to jeopardize relations in Europe and it's going to make the world a more dangerous place—quite the opposite. The reason one advocates and works for a missile defense system is to protect free peoples from the launch of a missile from a hostile regime. Russia is not hostile. Russia is a friend. We don't agree with Russia all the time, but nevertheless, I view them as a friendly nation, not a hostile nation. And I will work with Vladimir Putin not only at the G-8 but when he comes to visit up east here. But I know that's going to be part of our conversation.

By the way, in the case of the Czech Republic, Poland, Italy, and, to a certain extent, Bulgaria, and definitely Germany, there's a lot of, obviously, you know, Americans who are very interested in this trip. Polish Americans are—there's a lot of them, and they really love their country of origin, their grandfathers' country of origin. And this is an important trip symbolically, as well, to see their American President in Poland—or in Italy, a lot of Italian Americans are very proud of their heritage as well.

So the trip, obviously, is the chance to visit on important issues, whether it be Afghanistan or Iraq, where these countries are supportive, as well as their common interests in bilateral issues.

I'm looking forward to two things in Italy—obviously seeing His Holy Father. Sometimes I'm not poetic enough to describe what it's like to be in the presence of the Holy Father. It is a moving experience. And I have not been in the presence of this particular Holy Father. Obviously, three visits with the last great man, and I'm looking forward to this. I'm looking forward to hearing him. He's a good thinker and a smart man. I'll be in a listening mode.

And then Prime Minister Prodi, with whom I've had a long relationship. I knew him when he was the head of the EU. I can remember, fondly remember riding my mountain bike as hard as I could as he was jogging along the beaches in Georgia, needing him on the way by—a sign of close

friendship. We've got a good relationship. He's having to make difficult decisions in Afghanistan, and I hope my visit will help boost his courage in doing the right thing in Afghanistan.

And then, of course, Bulgaria; I'm looking forward to that as well. I've never been; it's the first time. I'm looking forward to seeing the leadership there. Bulgaria has made some very difficult decisions, but necessary decisions. We're proud to be allies. It's going to be—I love going to countries that may not expect to see the U.S. President. It's pretty predictable that the President would go to Germany or Italy, probably Poland and the Czech Republic, but not necessarily Bulgaria and Albania. And it's going to be a great honor for me to be in your country. I'm looking forward to it.

I'm excited about the trip. I gave a speech today—I don't know if you suffered through it or not, but it's—anyway, I was proud to give it, and I meant what I said. And we've got a darn good record, and I'm going to be taking that record, on behalf of the American people, to the G-8 and hoping to encourage others to match it.

Teodor. Ted.

Missile Defense System

Q. Teodor. You can call me Ted.

The President. Call me W. [Laughter]

Q. You just said that Vladimir Putin is your friend.

The President. Yes, he is.

Q. Now, given his angry response to missile defense, do you regret choosing Czech Republic and Poland as possible sites for the missile defense?

The President. No. The reason this country has been chosen is because it will make the missile defense system more effective as we provide defenses for most of our NATO allies.

Secondly, friends can disagree.

Q. Did he disappoint you?

The President. He is a—he is concerned about the missile defense system. He thinks it's aimed at him. It's not. It's aimed at rogue regimes that would use a missile to achieve political objective or to create unrest. And therefore, I sent Secretary Gates to see the leadership, the Russian leadership, to explain

our intentions. We've invited the Russians to participate, totally transparent——

Q. They are not happy——

The President. Let me finish, Ted. We're totally transparent in our designs. We want them to see our technologies. They're welcome to come. Angela Merkel was very instrumental in us reaching out to the Russians; she was deeply concerned about the ramifications of this decision. And so we're working very carefully, but we think it's the right thing to do.

Secondly, it is—I repeat, we have nothing to hide. Bob Gates said, you know, this kind of rhetoric is the kind of rhetoric that relieves the cold war. But the cold war is over. We're now into the 21st century, where we need to deal with the true threats, which are threats of radical extremists who will kill to advance an ideology and the threats of proliferation. And there's a lot of work we can do together to deal with these threats. And that's what I'll continue talking to President Putin about.

Klaus.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. But certainly it's fair to say the relationship between the West and Russia has become more complicated——

The President. Yes, it has.

Q. —in recent months. What needs to be done to avoid this relationship to degenerate further into a deep and lasting crisis? And in general, on that note, you set up the conversation. Is Russia—a reassertive Russia, a friend, an ally, or a challenge?

The President. For the U.S.—I can't speak for the EU-Russian relationship; that's recently where there's been some tension, as you noted—for the U.S.-Russian relationship, it's a complex relationship where we've got some areas of agreement and some areas of disagreement. We believe strongly in democracy. Vladimir Putin will tell me that Russia is a democracy and that he's advancing democracy. We have got some questions about that, of course. We believe that actions taken in Estonia, for example—in relation to the actions taken in Estonia were—it sent a confusing signal to us. We obviously have got a difficult issue with Kosovo. We believe

we ought to advance the Ahtisaari agreement through the United Nations Security Council.

But disagreement on issues doesn't mean that the relations aren't cordial. As a matter of fact, I have found that it's easier to disagree on issues when you have a cordial relationship. It means you can discuss your differences without hostility, which makes it easier that you can find common ground. And we have common ground with Russia on matters like Iran. We've worked closely with Russia in the U.N. Security Council to send a clear signal to the Iranians that their attempts at a nuclear weapon will be met with resistance, unified resistance.

The issue of proliferation is one where there's good cooperation between the United States and Russia. It's in the world's interest that the United States and Russia and other nations work together to stop proliferators from being able to get a hold of materials that could end up harming innocent people.

We've worked with Russia on North Korea. As you know, we spoke with one voice to the leadership in North Korea, that Russia and China and the United States and South Korea and Japan strongly oppose their desire to have a weapons program. And hopefully we can make progress.

In other words, one shouldn't be surprised that there are differences. And the fundamental question in world diplomacy is, how do you deal with the differences? Do you deal with them that ends up, hopefully, creating more opportunities for cooperation, or do you deal with them in such a way as it creates—it widens gulfs and creates more antagonisms?

And my relationship with Russia is firm. I tell people what I believe based upon certain principles. But it's going to be in such a way that treats people with respect. I've noticed that Angela Merkel has also had to deal with Vladimir Putin and has done so in a very respectful but firm way. And I admire the way she's handled her diplomacy. She has proven herself to be a very strong leader. And for that, I'm grateful, and I hope the German people are as well.

Marcin.

Poland-U.S. Relations/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Mr. President, your administration, you just said, offers a lot to Russia to gain acceptance, Russia's acceptance to idea building—[inaudible]—missile shield. And at the same time, so far, it doesn't seem that you offer much to Poland, which is supposed to host the interceptor site. How would you convince people in Poland, who are, frankly, not that much afraid of uranium threat, but they're listening to the threats from Russia very carefully?

The President. First of all, Poland and the U.S. are in NATO, and an attack on one is an attack on all. We can't offer any better security agreement than that, and we mean it. If you're an ally of the United States and NATO and you feel threatened by an outside force, we'll help you. I don't believe that there would be—I would certainly hope that Poland won't be threatened again by an outside force. I can understand why people in Poland could be nervous about that. After all, it's been a terrible part of your history.

But as an ally in NATO, I can't make a stronger statement than to say we stand with you, and in this case, this ally actually means it, and so do NATO allies. You know, I'm sure there's probably some skepticism from some older folks or those who study history, where Poland had been given assurances and those assurances didn't come through. Well, in this case, they will.

I don't view Poland as being under any military threat. I would hope the Polish people don't, either. Obviously, there are differences you have with Russia over meat, and I'm very aware of that. It's an EU matter; it's a matter that Angela Merkel is working hard, as the head of the EU at this point in time, to address that problem.

The best way to compensate Poland for our friendship is to have good, strong bilateral relations. As you know, we've worked hard on different agreements that would help create jobs. It's really the best thing that a relationship can do is yield tangible benefits for people, besides peace and security. And job creation and decent-paying jobs benefit society as a whole. And there's jobs as a result

of our airplane deal; there's capital investment; there is more transparency in our relationship. And we'll keep it that way. I'm sure I'll be discussing that with the President.

Yes, Maurizio.

Pope Benedict XVI/U.S. Foreign Policy

Q. Mr. President.

The President. How are you?

Q. Very good. Thank you for having us back here.

The President. Yes.

Q. Your first meeting with Benedict XVI, what are the values that you believe you share with this Pope? And besides this, on foreign policy, what common ground you may have with the Catholic Church on issues like Cuba or China or Lebanon?

The President. Yes. Thank you. The common values are respect for human life, human—and dignity. I think His Holy Father will be pleased to know that much of our foreign policy is based on the admonition, to whom much is given, much is required. I look forward to sharing with him our sincere desire to help alleviate poverty and hunger and disease.

I will remind him—in the Rose Garden yesterday, I talked about spending \$30 billion on our battle against HIV/AIDS, particularly on the continent of Africa. Our initiative is, thus far, a \$15 billion initiative over 5 years, that's helped provide antiretroviral drugs for about 1,100,000 people in a 3-year period, up from 50,000. Many of those folks who are helping to carry out that initiative are people from Catholic charities or Catholic congregations here in the United States, and I will tell him how proud I am of our Catholic citizens who have volunteered, in many cases, to help relieve suffering around the world.

I will also talk to him about our malaria initiative where we believe we will have gotten help to folks, particularly on the continent of Africa, in the form of nets and insecticides and medicines, to about 30 million people. I will remind him that this commitment is real and sincere.

I believe he believes—look, I don't want to put words in his mouth—I hope he believes in the universality of freedom because I certainly do. In other words, freedom is not just a Western ideal. It's just not the ideal

that some people—it's universal in application. I will remind him of my firm belief that freedom is not only universal, but history has proven democracies tend not to war with each other and that the best way to yield the peace, something I long for, is to help people become free.

I hope to get him talking. He's a sound thinker. I've read one of his works, and I'm looking forward to hearing this good, decent, honorable man share some thoughts with me. And I go in open-minded, and I'm willing to listen.

Just in terms of other issues, I will—if he cares to talk about Cuba, I'd love to talk about Cuba. I believe Cuba ought to be free. And I believe that when there is a transition to new leadership, the world ought to work for freedom, not stability, that the leading edge of our agenda ought to be to say to whomever takes over that government, we expect there to be elections and free press, free prisoners.

You mentioned Lebanon, I will confirm our strong support for the Siniora Government. I'm impressed by his courage. And I will explain to him that one of the reasons why we felt like it was important to go through with the Hariri trial for the U.N. was to enhance the Siniora Government, and it's to make it clear that there's been foreign interference in that country, and we expect that foreign interference to stop.

The other issue is China. I will tell him that there, too, we've got good relations, and I intend to keep them that way. Part of having good relations with a country is being in a position to talk about religious freedoms. I would remind him that I have been to church in China and actually found it to be a spiritual experience. It wasn't, like, fake; it was real. But I will assure him that I will continue to make the case for the Catholic Church inside of China.

One of the things I don't know if he knows I know, but there has been an attempt to get a good interface between the Chinese Government and the Catholic Church so that eventually the prescribed leadership, Catholic leadership would be able to have an active role in China. So far, the Chinese Government has resisted this, but I have been in—received several entreaties from our Catholic

cardinals here on behalf of His Holy Father to reach out to the Chinese, and I have. And if he cares, I will be glad to summarize those contacts with him.

Petar.

Missile Defense System/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Mr. President, concerning the shield, the anti-missile shield, I know Bulgaria is one of the newest members of NATO. But as I know, the shield will not cover the southeastern part of NATO, including Bulgaria. And there are American military facilities in this country, which makes some people nervous there. Are you planning to change the situation?

The President. The missile defense that we're talking about is primarily for the longer term missile. That's where the debate is. And you're right, that won't cover all of NATO. As I said in my opening comments, it will cover most of NATO.

Bulgaria will be covered by NATO missile defenses for intermediate-range missiles, and I will be glad to make that case. It's important for our NATO—when I'm in Bulgaria, it's important for our NATO allies not to feel like defenses apply to some but not everybody. And as you know, we're in discussions about access bases, which also, I would hope, would provide a sense of security.

The first goal, of course, is to work with everybody in your neighborhood to try to convince them to be peaceful in the first place so that the defenses aren't needed. But we've got to make sure if they ever are needed, that they're effective. And as you know, I'm deeply concerned about Iran having a nuclear weapon that could fly toward Europe or, for that matter, toward any other allies. And we don't want to ever have ourselves in a position where the world could become blackmailed.

And therefore, one way to deal with this issue is through a missile defense system. However, such a weapon, in this particular scenario, would not affect Bulgaria. It would be a much smaller one, for which we have different technologies, NATO technologies available.

One more round? All right, Ted. Is it, Ted?

War on Terror

Q. Yes, you can call me Ted. [Laughter]

The President. You already told me that once. I forgot.

Q. Mr. President, for better or worse, you undoubtedly changed modern history of this vote. I mean, are you happy with your decisions? Are you comfortable with your decisions? Are you listening to criticism around the world?

The President. Yes, there's a little bit of criticism out there, evidently. Yes, Ted, I hear what people say, and I'm very comfortable with my decisions, absolutely. Our country came under attack, and I vowed to the American people I would do all in my power to protect it, and it's still under threat. And the best way to protect America is to stay on the offense and bring people to justice before they hurt us. And we don't do that alone—we work with allies and friends, and we share intelligence; we help cut off money; we disrupt, jointly—

Q. Don't you—

The President. Let me finish, Ted. I also knew that we had to deal with threats before they came to hurt us, whether it be in Afghanistan and Iraq. I made the right decisions. And now the fundamental question is, will the world help these young democracies develop? And I believe it's in all our interests that these democracies survive. And I'm looking forward to thanking our host countries when I travel for their commitments—in some cases, Iraq and Afghanistan; in some cases only Afghanistan. Either case, they're very important.

If democracies can't help other democracies, then I worry about stability and peace in the long run. And so, no, I believe the decisions I made were the right decisions.

Q. You don't feel abandoned?

The President. What?

Q. Abandoned. You don't feel abandoned?

The President. No, no, not at all. Matter of fact, I was amazed by—he asked, do I feel abandoned. Quite the contrary. I feel that we're in this long-term struggle with a lot of strong allies—a lot. There's a lot of people in Iraq that committed resources and manpower and effort. A lot of people in Afghanistan—all the NATO countries have got manpower there, plus a lot of other countries.

No, quite the contrary. I feel these alliances are significant. And, you know, you've got to work at them. I constantly remind people there's a threat. And the stakes in the world—but, no. Thank you for asking.

Klaus-Dieter. My roommate in college was Rob Dieter. He was from Florida, though. [Laughter] You're Klaus-Dieter. Okay.

U.S.-EU Cooperation on the Environment/Alternative Fuel Sources

Q. Mr. President, in the run-up to the G-8 meeting, our energy—our climate change turnout will be a divisive issue, at least to the German press.

The President. Really? You mean you want it to be divisive.

Q. No, not at all.

The President. Are you going to go in open-minded?

Q. Yes, I'm always open-minded.

The President. That's good. Is that the case—

Q. Always. [Laughter]

Q. Let's say assuming it was true—you were—[inaudible]—this morning. Does it help to bridge the gap between the U.S. position and the European position, which includes firm mandatory caps on greenhouse gases? And is there any prospect for a firm consensus at Heiligendamm? Or have you basically preempted Heiligendamm?

The President. No, look, first of all, your opening question was, the German press is looking for conflict, is that what you said? I don't want to misquote you. [Laughter] I think, look, if people want to try to figure out a way to be divisive, they will try to create divisions. I don't view it that way. I view this as an effort by concerned nations to reach common accord to actually solve the problem.

And the initiative I laid out today said, we'll take the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases and come up with an international goal. In other words, there needs to be a post-Kyoto framework. And I suggested, here's one way to deal with the post-Kyoto world. First thing that the Chancellor wanted to know is, did I agree there ought to be a post-Kyoto framework? That's the threshold question, because if it's no, then we can end the conversation. If it's yes, then

what are your suggestions? And so today I said I believe there ought to be a post-Kyoto framework. And I believe Angela will be pleased with that because she is—this was something she was working toward.

Secondly, I believe there ought to be an international goal. How we arrive at that goal is—I set out a process where greenhouse gas emitters, including developing nations, ought to be at the table. As you know full well, that one could have a very strict regime on greenhouse gases, but if nothing were done with countries like India or China, all would be for naught. So I thought it made sense to include a variety of nations that are actually producing greenhouse gases, including Russia and China and India and the United States and the EU and others.

Thirdly, I said that each nation needs to come up with an interim goal and develop the methodology to achieve that goal. In other words, there's a commitment in our country—now, I said this in the Rose Garden, next to the Chancellor and Jose Barroso, that each country has got to develop a plan that suits its own economy and suits its own political environment. If you want the U.S. to be an active participant, that's the best way to do it as well. A lot of people don't particularly want our environmental policy written by somebody else. They think we ought to be writing our own environmental policy, in this case, to achieve international goals. And that's my pledge. I'm looking forward to it.

And I also bring a very good record, because the truth of the matter is, technology is going to enable us to meet two objectives—or three objectives, in the U.S. case: one, energy independent; two, economic vitality and growth. And as an active trading partner with the United States, you would want us to be economically strong. You don't want your trading partner to be weak; there would be nothing to trade with. And, finally, a strong steward of the environment, and technology is going to lead us there. And I look forward to explaining some of the technological breakthroughs that we have achieved and will achieve.

You probably don't know this but we're up to about, I think, 6 billion gallons of corn ethanol now being used in our cars. Over

the next years, 50 percent of every automobile in the United States will be flex-fuel. In other words, you can either use ethanol or gasoline, your choice. There's significant market penetration for ethanol in the Midwest. But we're spending billions of dollars—or millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars, on coming up with the ability to break down different forms of feedstocks to produce ethanol. That's called cellulosic ethanol, like switch grasses or wood chips. Wouldn't it be remarkable when we have a breakthrough to develop fuel to run our automobiles from wood chips? You got a lot of wood in Germany. I'd be glad to share that technology with you.

And so we're addressing greenhouse gases and tailpipe emissions to the point where I said to the United States, we'll have a mandatory fuel standard that will reduce our gasoline consumption by 20 percent over 10 years. It's a remarkable initiative. No President has ever said that. I happen to believe that there's going to be some significant battery technology breakthroughs as well, and I look forward to sharing that with our partners. Matter of fact, the Japanese are spending a lot of money on battery technologies, and it's very conceivable one day we'll be having hybrid plug-in battery-driven vehicles with a regular-sized automobile. You can do it with a golf cart now, but on a lot of our freeways, it would be dangerous. *[Laughter]* Yours, too.

The fundamental question facing America is, how fast can we develop zero-emission coal-fired electricity plants? And we're spending a lot of money there, and we look forward to sharing technologies with our allies and friends and people who need help.

And so we've got a very strong agenda that I'm looking forward to sharing in the G-8. And one of the things I'm going to do is encourage others to step up to the research and development arena. They ought to be spending as much as we are. They ought to be investing. And then we ought to be willing to share that technology with developing countries.

And, finally, if you're really interested in solving greenhouse gases and making sure your economy grows, you ought to be for civilian nuclear power, Klaus.

Q. I'm open. *[Laughter]*

The President. There you go. You're my man. And we're spending—we're advancing an interesting initiative with Russia, Japan, France, Great Britain on coming up with new technologies on fast-burner reactors in order to be able to deal with the waste issue.

Anyway, there's a lot to talk about, and so I'm looking forward to it. It's an important subject, just like feeding the hungry is important; just like solving HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa is important; just like dealing with malaria is important; just like poor children, particularly women, girls, getting an education is important. These are all important initiatives, and I can't wait to discuss them there.

Marcin.

U.S. Visa Policy

Q. Yes, last time you were in Eastern Europe, last year in Estonia and Latvia, you promised changes in visa regime for your close allies. Now many months—

The President. I promised I would work on it.

Q. Many months went by.

The President. Marcin, make sure you quote me correctly.

Q. Okay.

The President. Yes, let me talk about it. It affects the Czech Republic; it affects Poland; and it affects Bulgaria.

I fully understand the frustrations of countries and people of countries who have supported friendship with the United States. And they look at neighbors in the EU or NATO and say, wait a minute, we're treated differently. I understand that.

This is an issue that your leaders have spoken very candidly with me. And I told them I didn't—I thought it was unfair that the German citizen be given a type of visa and not the Polish citizen. And we're working closely with Congress to change long-standing law. And I said I would—first of all, we set up a way forward, a roadmap to visa changes. And I said I would work with our Congress to come up with a fair law that treated people fairly, and we are. We have yet to pass the law, but we are working with Congress.

There is, as you may or may not know, a healthy immigration debate taking place in

the United States. I'm a big proponent of what we call comprehensive immigration reform, as I am a proponent of visa reform, visa waiver reform.

I can't give you a firm prediction as to exactly when this will emerge from Congress, but we're working hard to see if we can't get it done.

Maurizio.

President's Upcoming Visit to Italy/Italy's Role in Afghanistan

Q. Mr. President, you said that you hope that your arrival will boost Mr. Prodi's energy on Afghanistan.

The President. No, let me rephrase that. Can I restate that?

Q. Of course.

The President. I don't want to boost his energy. I do want to sit down and talk to him about how important the Italian commitment is to Afghanistan and its future, is really what I meant to say.

Q. And that was what my question was about. What would you like Italy to do in Afghanistan and, more in general, in the war on terror? How do you see Italy as a global partner on this issue? And also if you can spend a few words on the protesters that will receive you in Rome. They are very angry.

The President. Oh, yes? I'm going to meet some protesters in Rome again? [Laughter]

Q. They declared a "No Bush Day."

The President. First of all, when you go to free societies, you tend to see protesters. Freedom of speech, that's what we're talking about. It's what happens when you travel. I presume there's going to be a few in Germany, just like there were—listen, when world leaders get together, or a leader shows up that people pay attention to, people get on TV by protesting. They've got different causes, and they want to express themselves. And I welcome going to a society where people are free to speak. That's actually a healthy thing. It's a sign of a robust society. We had a few, one time, in Genoa, if you remember.

Q. Who doesn't remember?

The President. Yes. Anyway, that's what happens when world leaders get together. Now the other—

Q. And the other question was about Afghanistan, Italy's role in Afghanistan.

The President. Yes, it's a very important role. First of all, commitment to Afghanistan, itself, helps. Basically it says to the Afghan people, we want to help you; we know you're struggling. And it encourages people. The idea of saying we're a robust, free society, and we want to stand with you as you try to develop your own society in your own image is important to the psychology of the country.

Secondly, Italy is making significant contribution—police training, judicial training. It's an important commitment. And in the war on terror, the idea of sharing intelligence when we find it, it's in both our interests. If we know somebody is plotting and planning in Italy, we'll share that information, and vice versa. And that's really what matters, is the ability to talk to each other in such a way that if we have information that is beneficial for one or the other, we're comfortable enough of sharing that information so we can protect ourselves.

Make no mistake about it, the enemy wants to strike again. We work a lot trying to find out where. This enemy is dangerous. These are ideologues who have got ambitions, and it's very important that we all take them seriously. The temptation is to say, well, maybe they're not that dangerous anymore. I'm telling you, they're dangerous, and they need the full commitment of free nations, the commitment to work together, the commitment to watch their finances, the commitment to understand what they're thinking and what they're doing. And they're moving. And they'll kill you like that in order to achieve their objectives, make no mistake about it. And the temptation is to say, oh, no, it's just a couple of guys that aren't that dangerous. They're dangerous, and I will remind our friends. Italy has been a strong partner in a lot of areas, and I appreciate it.

Petar.

The Presidency/U.S. Foreign Policy/Alternative Fuel Sources

Q. Back to Russia—you know that sometimes you spoke about the energy and energy

security. Sometimes energy is used as a political tool, especially if there is a sense of—in Eastern Europe that Russia is using its oil and gas as a political tool. Do you have any leverage on Russia and the Kremlin in this field of energy security?

And if you allow, a second, more personal question.

The President. Yes, go ahead.

Q. Just 18 months from now your second term expires. And very crucial events happened during both your terms, and crucial decisions were taken here in this building. What world and what future for this great country do you envision in the next, say, 10 to 25 years from now?

The President. Thanks. I do have—I don't know, 19 months?

Q. Eighteen.

The President. Who's counting? [*Laughter*] I'm going to sprint—first thing you've got to know about me is I'm going to sprint to the finish. I've got a lot to do. And I'm going to work as hard as I can to get it done. You've heard me talk about a lot of issues. We've got an engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan, on HIV/AIDS and feeding the hungry and dealing with proliferation and working on the environment. There's a lot to do, a lot of big issues. A lot to do here at home too—keep taxes low. I'm a tax cutter. I believe people ought to have more money in their pocket; that's how you grow your economies. We're talking about health care, a big education reform, and immigration reform.

There's a lot to do, and I don't have that much time to think beyond my Presidency. I'm occupied with the moment. That's the way—I'll put a lot of energy into the final 18 months and give it my all. That's all you can do in life is give it your best. That's what I'm going to do. I owe that to the American people. I believe we're going to get a lot done too.

My concern for America is that we never become an isolationist nation or a protectionist nation. We've had those tendencies in the past. I'm not suggesting that's where we are, but I am worried that that might happen at some point in time. It's easy to say, "Well, the competition is too tough; let's just not trade," or, "It's too difficult to fight the

terrorists," or, "It's too difficult to help advance democracy; let's just kind of retreat." I think it would be a huge mistake for America. I would hope that 15 years from now America still works with other nations to advance liberty.

I remind people about my Japanese friend Prime Minister Koizumi, now Prime Minister Abe, Shinzo Abe, a good guy. Isn't it interesting that the U.S. President sits at the table with the Japanese Prime Minister to talk about peace, and my father fought them, and they were the sworn enemy? And now we're working together on peace. Same thing can happen if the United States stays engaged and helps societies become free societies. Liberty has got an amazing way of transforming enemies into friends. Same in Germany, in many ways. We're allies. Angela Merkel and I are very close. I would hope the United States would never lose sight of that capacity.

And the other question?

Q. About Russia, political—

The President. Oh, the energy, yes. Here's the thing: You've got your worries about supplies of energy, and so do I, where we get our energy from. And therefore, our strategy is to diversify. If you're interested in reducing dependence on crude oil, then what you do is develop different ways to power your automobiles. And so we're using corn to power our automobiles. That way we don't have to use gasoline and therefore use crude oil as a feedstock.

My goal is to make us nearly totally independent from foreign sources of oil. And that ought to be the goal of a nation that worries from sole-source supplier, that you ought to figure out different ways to do it. How do you do it? Well, you can do it through nuclear technology, for example; as opposed to using natural gas to power your electricity, use nuclear technology. Hopefully, we can come with clean coal technologies so that you can burn coal.

We need to do it in the United States. We've got about 250 years of coal supply. Coal is a particular problem when it comes to pollution; we know that. We spent about \$2 billion—\$2 billion on your FutureGen plant, clean coal technologies. We believe that we'll be able to develop a coal-fired plant

that has zero emissions. And when that technology comes to fruition, if you can get yourself some coal, you've got your ability to diversify away from sole-source supplier of energy. And that's what technology is going to yield.

I truly believe over the next 10 to 20 years, you're going to see some amazing technological breakthroughs. And I believe and hope that those technological breakthroughs will make a lot of the discussions we're having here at the beginning of the 21st century moot, relative to energy security and environmental quality. I believe some of the discussions I have had with you about battery technologies will be real. I don't know if you know this, we're spending over a billion dollars on hydrogen technologies. We believe that cars will be powered by hydrogen, which will obviously relieve pressure on crude oil dependence. The emissions of hydrogen-driven automobiles is going to be dribblets of water, which will be good for the environment.

And, you know, I would hope that mankind doesn't lose faith in the capacity of technology to transform the way we live in positive ways. Here in America, what's interesting is to watch some of the investment flows of private capital. We're a system based upon private capital. And so I talked about, in my speech today, about public capital investment, public tax dollars going into research and development, over \$12 billion over the years that I've been President.

But there's enormous sums of money going into the private markets as well because people see economic opportunity can be derived by new energy technologies. And it's that synergy to be derived from public participation and public policy, the declaration of a mandatory fuel standard coupled with private sector investments that could yield breakthroughs.

And it's also healthy that there be competition. I like the idea that the Japanese are pushing hard for battery technologies. I want our people pushing hard for battery technologies. Competition is healthy. It yields better product for consumers. It makes us all work more efficiently and wiser in the end.

And so I'm an optimistic guy. I think when you look back 10 or 20 years from now, you'll be amazed at what happens. And I'm excited to be a part of it. I've got 18 more months to be a part of it here in this capacity, and it's going to be an exciting 18 months.

Anyway, thank you for your time. Looking forward to seeing you over there. Yes, enjoyed it. Good visit.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:20 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Vaclav Klaus, Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, and former President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy; Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; President Lech Kaczyński of Poland; Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon; and President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 1. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Eberhard Piltz of Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen, Germany

May 31, 2007

U.S.-EU Cooperation on the Environment/Upcoming G-8 Summit

Mr. Piltz. Mr. President, the German Presidency of the G-8 has put the focus for the next meeting on climate change and what to do about it. Europeans want fixed caps. You have been opposed to that all the time. Now you announced a new proposal. Have you changed your position?

The President. First, let me, if I might—I think that my friend Angela Merkel, for whom I have great respect, wants to discuss a lot of matters, whether it be HIV/AIDS or malaria or hunger, depravation, as well as climate change. And I'm looking forward to it. I really am. I've been to this beautiful part of Germany before. It's a beautiful part of your country.

No, I've always taken the issue seriously. I've told the American people and those who are willing to listen that I take climate change seriously. And today I talked about a post-

Kyoto framework in which the world can discuss this issue in a serious fashion.

Angela was concerned at one time whether or not I'd be willing to accept a post-Kyoto framework, and today I expressed my keen desire to work with her and other leaders on such a framework. And I also suggested that a good first step toward achieving serious accomplishments would be to have the major emitters gather and set a goal, an international goal by the end of 2008. And I'm very serious about that. I'm looking forward to working with G-8 partners and others.

I think one of the breakthroughs that I hope we can achieve in Germany at this G-8 is to get India and China as participants in setting an international goal. And what that goal is, that will be determined as a result of these meetings. But Angela should be proud of leading the international community toward these kind of breakthroughs.

Mr. Piltz. Though this is the beginning of a process, at the end of which there could be fixed goals?

The President. There would be a goal, absolutely. And that would be determined by the major emitters, the major greenhouse gas emitters. Generally, sometimes people—some sit around the table and come up with what they think is the best solution. My view is, is that they need to get the United States, China, India, the EU, Russia, other countries as well around the table and say, okay, we agree on a goal. And each nation needs to come up with a way to achieve that goal.

And listen, the truth of the matter is, the best way to achieve, in our case, a couple of national objectives—energy security and economic security, as well as being good stewards of the environment—is a strong push for technologies. And I'll bring a very good record to the G-8. We've spent a lot of money here in the United States on developing clean technologies. We're driving a lot of our automobiles now with corn-based ethanol. That gets us off of oil, which is good for economic and national security, and it helps with the environment.

Missile Defense System

Mr. Piltz. Missile defense, sir—the harsh Russian reaction on U.S. plans on missile de-

fense signals some sort of deterioration in relations. Are we headed back to colder times?

The President. Yes, that's a really good question. I certainly hope not. Our message to—and my personal message to Vladimir Putin is, there's no need to try to relive the cold war. It's over. And we don't view Russia as an enemy. We view Russia as an opportunity to work together. We don't agree with every decision Russia has made. She doesn't agree with every decision I have made. But I have worked hard to make sure that we can find common ground on issues like proliferation and dealing with Islamic radicals and Iran or North Korea.

You know, Vladimir Putin has spoken out very strongly on missile defense. And so, frankly, it—I visit with Angela quite often, and one of the things she talked to me about, is there not a way to open a dialog with President Putin on missile defense? So I sent Bob Gates, our Secretary of Defense, there, and my message to Vladimir Putin—and it will be when I see him at the G-8 in Germany as well as here in the States—is, you don't have anything to fear. As a matter of fact, this system is aimed at protecting NATO allies, and if you want to participate, we would like you to participate with us. We'll be totally transparent in the technologies that we're deploying. We want you to come and inspect our sites. We want you to talk to our military. We want to be wide open, because this system is not geared toward Russia. It's geared toward a rogue state that may be able to acquire a nuclear weapon.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Mr. Piltz. You mentioned Angela Merkel's role. Is there a role for Germany in this difficult dialog, as a bridgebuilder or something like that?

The President. Well, it sounds like to me, Angela has had some pretty difficult dialogs herself as the leader of the EU. And I think the key thing is for Angela and me to work closely together to have a—when we can in dealing with Russia. But each nation has to deal with Russia in her own terms. I don't need any help dealing with Vladimir Putin, and he doesn't need any help dealing with me. We're sovereign nations; we have our positions.

One of the things that I have worked hard to do is to—and received some criticism here in the States—is, I’ve worked hard to have a personal relationship with Vladimir Putin so that when I discuss things with him, I can find areas of agreement, but I’ve also got a relationship such that I can bring up areas of concern without rupturing relations. And it’s—you know, some have suggested, well, there’s no need to have relations with Russia. Well, I strongly disagree with that. I think it’s important for the U.S. and Russia to have relations.

War on Terror

Mr. Piltz. Sir, how satisfied are you with international burden-sharing in the war on terror?

The President. Good; it’s good. As a matter of fact, the coalitions are much bigger than anybody could have envisioned. You know, one of my concerns, however, is that, just in general, people don’t take the threat seriously. In other words, they say, “Well, there haven’t been many attacks; there’s been a few attacks; but we shouldn’t be that worried about it.” I’m deeply worried about it, and I really strongly believe the free world ought to be worried about radicals and extremists who will kill in the name of an ideology.

See, I view this as an ideological conflict between people who are willing to murder and want to spread their vision, and those of us who believe in liberty and the universality of liberty. And so my main worry is complacency over the long run. I am pleased with the cooperation at this point in time. We’ve got great relations with Germany. Obviously, if we know of a plot that may be taking place in Germany, we will share information on an instant basis, and vice versa. And that ought to be comforting to the German citizens.

Germany-U.S. Relations

Mr. Piltz. That was my next question, the state of the relationship between America and Germany. Are we back to, as your father put it, “partners in leadership”?

The President. I think we are. First of all, I had a decent relationship with Gerhard Schroeder. I never bore any—look, there was

a difference on Iraq, obviously; it was a clear difference on Iraq. But that didn’t cause me to say, well, Germany isn’t worthy as a worthy ally. Quite the contrary, I felt Germany always was a worthy ally and an important ally for the United States and an important player in Europe.

Angela Merkel comes at a different time in our relationship. She’s a woman who I—for whom I’ve got great admiration. I don’t know if you know this or not, but she and I, we speak by secure video on a regular basis. And that’s what strategic partners do, and our discussions are important discussions. She understands the issues very well. She’s the kind of person that can get a fellow to talk freely and candidly, and she speaks the same way to me. And I admire her a lot. I would say our relations are vital, and they’re strong right now. And that’s the way I intend to keep it.

Mr. Piltz. Thank you very much, sir.

The President. Glad to have you. Looking forward to coming to your great country again.

Mr. Piltz. I’ll be there too.

The President. Yes, sir. [Laughter]

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:27 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Chancellor Angela Merkel and former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 1. A portion of this interview could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Interview With Andi Bejtja of Vizion Plus TV, Albania

May 31, 2007

President’s Upcoming Visit to Albania

Mr. Bejtja. Mr. President, first of all, I want to thank you for the opportunity you give to me and to Albanian public for this interview. And I have just a simple question in the beginning. What is the reason of including Albania in this European tour this time?

The President. That’s a fascinating question. First of all, I want to make sure the Albanian people understand that America

knows that you exist and that you're making difficult choices to cement your free society. I'm coming as a lover of liberty to a land where people are realizing the benefits of liberty.

Secondly, I've been impressed by your leadership. I have met your leaders at different times——

Mr. Bejtja. Impressed in what sense?

The President. In the sense that they're committed to common values with the United States, that they believe in certain freedoms, and that people ought to be given a chance to live in a free society. And so my message is that we welcome our friendship, that I'm proud of the hard work that you're doing, and I'm particularly grateful to be the first sitting President ever to come to Albania.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Mr. Bejtja. Yes, this is a historical visit. And Albanians hoping to get a—to receive an invitation at summit to join NATO in 2008. How realistic this Albanian expectation is, according to you?

The President. Well, my message to the Albanian Government and the Albanian people is, first of all, thank you for your interest in joining NATO. But like I said to other countries that are at this stage in the process, that there's a certain map that has to be followed, a certain way forward. There are certain obligations that have to be met. And my only advice is, work as hard as you possibly can to achieve the different benchmarks that would cause the NATO members to accept Albania.

Kosovo/United Nations Security Council

Mr. Bejtja. And let's get to the hardest point: Kosovo. I mean, in the beginning of the week, you just had a phone call from Russian President Vladimir Putin, and you agreed with him to rediscuss Kosovo future once again. And people are worried about that. Do you expect any compromise with Russians that may affect our desired plan as it stands now?

The President. Well, let me make it clear what I did say.

Mr. Bejtja. Because everybody is worried about that.

The President. Yes, they ought to be worried about it. It's a difficult issue. But they ought not to be worried about my position. My position is that we support the Ahtisaari plan, and that's the instructions that I have given to Secretary of State Rice, who totally agrees with me. And those will be the instructions we give to the United Nations.

And so I don't know who characterized my phone call with Vladimir Putin, but as I told him on the phone, look, we don't want to—we would hope to avoid a major conflict in the area, but we feel strongly that the Ahtisaari plan is the right way to go; it's the right way to move forward. And that's the U.S. position.

Mr. Bejtja. So in case of a Russian veto next month at Security Council, does U.S. have plan B for Kosovo?

The President. Well, plan A is to try to make plan A work.

Mr. Bejtja. Yes, but is the plan A——

The President. I know, but you're asking me to think hypothetically. It happens, by the way, with the United States press too. They say, "If something doesn't happen"—my job is make it happen in the first place. So we're working to try to convince all members of the U.N. Security Council to support the Ahtisaari plan, and we're out making our case as to why it makes sense and why this will make—yield peace. We would also hope that the EU would continue and NATO would continue to work with Serbia, to give them a way forward as well, that there be an opportunity for them to become participants in some of the European structures and, in this case, in NATO's case, an opportunity, perhaps, to join NATO and have U.S. as a partner.

President's Decisionmaking/U.S. Foreign Policy

Mr. Bejtja. Let me put another question. I mean, to be honest, it's very easy in the region to find pro-American governments, but it's not as easy to find so-called pro-American nations, or better saying, pro-American public or people. Does U.S. have any strategy to reverse this trend, to make U.S. policy more effective in long term?

The President. Well, first of all, it's like—people ask me the question about popularity,

whether it be overseas or at home. You can't make decisions and try to be—and want to be popular. You make decisions because you want to be right. I make decisions for what's best for the United States of America. Sometimes that makes me popular; sometimes it doesn't.

But popularity comes and goes, but certain principles should never leave. And I believe firmly the United States must confront tyranny and disease and hunger. And I believe the United States must secure our homeland from further attack, and I will take the actions necessary to do so. I hope others understand why. I would like for people to understand the decisionmaking I've done. I want people to respect my country and to like the American people, and most people do like the American people. Sometimes they like the American President, and sometimes they don't. But popularity is—I would ask the question, are you still going to make decisions based upon solid principles? And the answer is, absolutely.

President's Upcoming Visit to Albania

Mr. Bejtja. Yes. And let me ask one childish question, because it is your first time in Albania and everyone is wondering, what does come to your mind when you heard the word, Albania?

The President. Beautiful coastline; interesting history; Muslim people who can live at peace, that's what comes to mind. I'm excited to go. I must confess that I also thought about the dark days of communism, when the society was a closed society. I'm looking forward—I met many Albanians who are excited to be living in an open society. And I can't wait to come to your country. I've heard great things about it, and it's going to be an exciting trip for me and Laura.

Mr. Bejtja. Thank you very much, Mr. President, and welcome.

The President. Yes, sir, thanks.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:37 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 1.

Interview With Vassilev Petrov of Bulgarian National Television

May 31, 2007

President's Upcoming Visit to Bulgaria

Mr. Petrov. Mr. President, whom do you want the Bulgarians to meet, a demanding leader of a superpower, an ally, a friend, somebody feared or loved?

The President. I want them to meet a guy—that's a great question. I want them to meet a person who, one, respects the people of Bulgaria and appreciates Bulgarian contributions to the world; a person who understands how difficult the transition from one form of government to democracy is; and a person who represents a nation of decent, compassionate people.

You know, I tell people sometimes—in America they always respect the Presidency, and sometimes they like the President. And I made some tough decisions, you know, and I understand that. But I represent a country that really cares deeply about the human condition, and I bring a spirit of friendship to Bulgaria and its people.

Bulgaria-U.S. Relations

Mr. Petrov. Bulgaria is an ally; it's hosting three joint military bases. What will Bulgaria get in return?

The President. Well, first of all, you've got a good friend. And I don't think friends really kind of measure decisionmaking on a quid pro quo basis. In other words, relationships, they're evolving and they're growing. I presume Bulgaria made the decisions, first and foremost, for the basing because it was in her best interests. In other words, sovereign nations say, well, this is in my interests.

Secondly, look, there are some security issues, obviously. One of the great things about a relationship with the United States is we keep our word, or we should keep our word. And we'll keep our word as long as I'm President; I promise you. And I would hope that the citizens would get a sense of comfort through the relationship with the United States and other nations that are involved with these great defensive alliance.

U.S. Visa Policy

Mr. Petrov. Mr. President, we are good enough to fight with you; why aren't we good enough to have a visa-free entry into the United States? Are we that dangerous?

The President. That's a great question. Listen, you're not the first person who has ever asked a question in that form. I want your people to know that I understand there is a contradiction; that on the one hand, you're a strong ally, and yet other allies of the United States are treated differently. And this is a tough issue, because it has to go through our Congress.

And I'm working very carefully with governments, as well as with our Congress, to come up with a solution that is satisfactory. I'm sorry it's taken so long, and I know it's created frustrations. And there is an inherent contradiction, and I can't deny that. The only thing I can do is pledge to make the system work better. We're involved in a very serious immigration debate here in America, as well, that's somewhat related to this issue, and hopefully we can get a lot of these issues taken care of this summer.

War on Terror in Iraq

Mr. Petrov. On Iraq, Bulgarian civilians and soldiers died there, so it may be right and just to ask you, do you admit any mistakes in Iraq?

The President. Well, the first thing I want to say is, to the Bulgarian mother or father or wife or husband, my deepest sympathies go to your loved one. I deal with the pain of death here in America. One of my jobs as the person who made the decision to put our troops there, of course, is to try to comfort those who have lost a loved one. And it's, frankly, the most painful aspect of the job, knowing my decision caused a child to be lost to a family.

And so what I tell those parents, and I'd like to share the same thing with the Bulgarian families, is, one, the cause was necessary and noble for peace; two, that I'm committed to helping this Iraqi Government succeed, and I think the people will look back 50 years from now and say, "Oh, I understand now why they were doing what they were doing," because democracies and liberties help yield peace; thirdly, that I won't

let politics get in the way of making important decisions to help achieve the mission. In other words, we won't let their loved one die in vain. You can look back on any war and determine whether or not certain tactics could be changed, but the strategic decision, removing Saddam Hussein, was the right decision.

Russia-U.S. Relations/Missile Defense System

Mr. Petrov. Your competition with Russia elsewhere but also in our region is getting hotter. Where is Bulgaria in all that? Are we on our own in the superpowers' game?

The President. First of all—you know, it's interesting. I guess the press tries to build up a major competition with Russia. I don't view it that way.

Mr. Petrov. Why?

The President. Well, I think, first of all, the cold war is over. I don't view Russia as an enemy. And I've got a good relationship with Vladimir Putin, and I intend to keep it that way. Now, that doesn't mean I agree with him on every issue, and he certainly doesn't agree with me. The latest flare up, of course, is whether or not we should be working with our allies to develop a missile shield. And to that end, I sent Bob Gates, our Secretary of Defense, to see Vladimir Putin, and I sent him a message. And then I told it to him recently myself. I said, we have nothing to hide; as a matter of fact, if you would like to join, we would like to welcome—we welcome you. You're not the enemy.

We're not trying to isolate Russia. What we're attempting to do is protect ourselves and friends and allies against a rogue regime with a missile. That's a realistic possibility. I said, why don't you send your generals or send your people to the United States, and we will show you our systems. We'll be fully transparent.

So I will work—I think it is important for the citizens of Bulgaria to know that they've got a great friend in the United States. But I am also working hard to make sure that we're—to prevent any escalation of rhetoric. I don't think there's a military threat toward Bulgaria, but if there were, you would have a friend to help you.

Secondly, I think it's important for the people of Bulgaria to know that if I think Russia is wrong, I've got the kind of relationship where I can explain it very clearly, and not afraid to do so, by the way. But there are areas where we can work together with Russia too.

Bulgarian Nurses Held in Libya

Mr. Petrov. You've already supported the Bulgarian nurses jailed in Libya. Do you still support them? Do you think it will be a positive outcome?

The President. I do, I hope so, certainly. This has got to be painful not only to the families of the Bulgarian nurses but to the people of Bulgaria. I called the President a while back and told him that we're very much committed to helping to not only support the nurses but to free the nurses. And that's the position of the United States. We've sent that message very clearly to the Libyan Government. As I understand it, Tony Blair was working the issue the other day as well. We're very—we're committed, and would hope that this—the tragic case, it's a painful case, would be solved quickly, in a way that's satisfactory to the Bulgarian people.

President's Upcoming Visit to Bulgaria

Mr. Petrov. Mr. President, if we conclude, once again, could you say to the citizens of Bulgaria, summing up, what kind of face will you present to them? We know you value convictions and values, but can you admit also making mistakes?

The President. I mean, if you're trying to say, did I make a mistake routing Al Qaida out of Afghanistan, the answer is, absolutely not. Getting rid of Saddam Hussein was the right thing to do. You've got to understand, my decisionmaking is based, of course, first and foremost on the best interests of the United States. And we got attacked. Nearly 3,000 of our citizens died, and it affected my thinking. I will continue to make decisions to help secure our country.

But you'll see a guy come to Bulgaria who is grateful for the hospitality, grateful for the friendship, someone who brings the great spirit of America. Listen, I represent a great country because our people are great. Our people are hard-working, decent, honorable,

compassionate people, who care deeply about freedom and liberty. I'm really proud to be their President.

Mr. Petrov. Mr. President, thank you very much for this interview.

The President. Honored to be with you. Looking forward to coming.

Mr. Petrov. Thank you very much.

The President. My pleasure.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:45 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia; President Georgi Parvanov of Bulgaria; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 1.

Remarks Following a Briefing on Comprehensive Immigration Reform *June 1, 2007*

First, I thank you very much for your hard work on a comprehensive immigration bill and your concern about our country. And the two go hand in hand. I believe that now is the time to address the issue of immigration. I think it's in our national security interests, and I think it's in the interest of making sure America never loses sight of who we are.

This is a difficult issue for a lot of folks. I understand that. But because it's difficult probably means we need to work doubly hard to get it done. And now is the time to get it done. No matter how difficult it may seem for some politically, I strongly believe it's in this Nation's interest for people here in Washington to show courage and resolve and pass a comprehensive immigration reform.

My administration is deeply involved in this issue. I feel passionate about the issue. I believe it's in this country's interest to solve the problem. I believe it's in our interest when we find a system that is broken to fix it, and the immigration system today is broken. And I've asked Michael and Carlos Gutierrez to work the issue on the Hill, and these men are doing good work. They understand the issue. They understand the bill, and they understand they need to work with the Republicans and Democrats to get the job done.

I say the system isn't working because there's a lot of Americans who say that the government is not enforcing our border. I say the system is broken because there are people coming into America to do work that Americans are not doing, and there are good, decent employers who unknowingly are hiring them, which is against the law.

The system is broken, in my judgment, because there are 11 to 12 million people living in the shadows of a free society. The system is broken because there are people who are exploiting human beings for material gain. There are *coyotes*—those are human smugglers—charging decent people large sums of money to come and work to put food on the table for their families.

There's a document forgery industry in place, because the system is broken, providing people with false documentation so they can do work that Americans are not doing in order to provide for their families. There are so-called innkeepers providing substandard hovels for people who are smuggled into our country. In other words, we have got a system that is causing people—good, decent people—to be exploited. And therefore, now is the time to get it fixed.

For those concerned about border security, this bill focuses on border security. For those concerned about making sure that we have workers available to do jobs—decent jobs to make sure our economy continues to grow, this bill addresses that issue. For those concerned that we must enable 11 to 12 million people to come out of the shadows of our society, this bill addresses that. For those concerned about whether or not America will still have the capacity to assimilate the newly arrived, it addresses that issue too.

This is a good piece of legislation. I'm sure some of you in the audience here will say, "Well, it's not perfect; there are some aspects of the bill that I would like to see changed." On a piece of legislation this complicated, the question people have to answer is, are we going to sacrifice the good for the sake of the perfect? And my call to you is, is that we need to work on a comprehensive bill together. First of all, I know you're already doing that, so I'm really here to thank you.

I want to address a couple of the key issues that people are addressing. If you want to

kill a bill, then you just go around America saying, "This is amnesty." In other words, there are some words that elicit strong reactions from our fellow citizens. Amnesty is when a person breaks the law and is completely forgiven for having done so. This bill isn't amnesty. For those who call it amnesty, they're just trying to, in my judgment, frighten people about the bill.

This bill is one that says, we recognize that you're here illegally, and there's a consequence for it. We can argue about the consequences, but you can't argue about the fact that there are consequences in this bill for people who have broken our law.

People say, well, the bill is really—is not going to do much to enforce the border. Well, the truth of the matter is, certain aspects of the law don't come into being until certain border measures are taken. But I would remind people that you cannot fully enforce the border so long as people are trying to sneak in this country to do jobs Americans aren't doing. You can try, but doesn't it make sense to help the Border Patrol do their job by saying, if you're going to come and do a job, there is a legal way to do it, so you don't have to sneak across in the first place. If you're interested in border security, you've got to recognize that giving people a chance to come and work here on a temporary basis makes it more likely the border will be enforced.

There are some who—I don't know if they say this explicitly, but they certainly allege or hint that probably the best way to deal with 11 to 12 million people is to get them to leave the country. That's impossible. That's the kind of statement that sometimes happens in the political process aimed to inflame passion, but it's completely unrealistic. It's not going to happen. And therefore, the fundamental question for those who disagree—and there's some good folks who disagree on both political parties, I might add—is, what's the solution?

This bill is not amnesty, but it recognizes that it is impossible for this country to rout people out of our society and, quote, "send them home." It's just not going to happen. And so good people have come together and derived a solution based upon compromises that addresses this problem in a humane way.

I recently gave a speech at the Coast Guard Academy, and I was preceded by a young man, a Latino, who stood up as the head of his class, addressing his classmates and their families and the President of the United States. And he talked about his migrant grandfather, how proud the migrant grandfather would be. It struck me again what a remarkable country it is where a person with a dream for his immediate family and future family could come to this country, work hard, make sacrifices, and have his grandson address the President and his class.

This has been the American story for decades and decades—waves of people looking for a better life, seeking something better for themselves and their families, willing to sacrifice and work hard. And we've got to understand—and great successes have resulted from that spirit. And this country must never lose sight that what has made us unique and, in my judgment, great is that we welcome people like that in a legal way, that throughout our history there have been the stories of people who have enriched our soul and lifted our spirit by coming to America.

One of the great things about our country is we've had the capacity to welcome people throughout our history. And we've become all Americans. We've got different backgrounds, different heritages, our forefathers may have spoken different languages, but we're all American. We've been able to assimilate under the laws and traditions of our country. And as a result, we're a stronger nation for it.

America must not fear diversity. We ought to welcome diversity. We ought to have confidence in what we have done in the past and not lose confidence about what we will do in the future.

And so I want to thank you all for joining on a really important piece of legislation. It's the right thing to do. It's the right approach to take. It is right to address a problem. It is right to work with people in both political parties. It is right to argue for what you believe and recognize that compromise might be necessary to move the bill along. And it is right to take political risk for Members of the United States Congress.

I say—I don't think this is risky, frankly. I don't view this as risk reward. I, frankly,

view it as doing what you ought to do. See, people ought to be running for office to do what's right for the United States of America. That's what I believe people run for office for. And so I want you to know that you've got an administration that looks forward to working with people. I will do my best to make sure that this debate does not denigrate into name-calling and finger-pointing. And we'll spend energy and time and effort to help you advance a really important piece of legislation for the good of this country.

I've come by to say thanks. Chertoff and Gutierrez can tell you how the bill has gotten this far and what we see in the future. But I'm looking forward to signing a bill, and I think we will. I truly believe that when people with good will and good heart and with focus on helping this country come together, that we can get a good piece of legislation out. And I'm looking forward to signing it. I hope you'll be there when I do.

God bless. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:26 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to S. 1348.

Statement on the American Citizens Held in Iran

June 1, 2007

Several of our fellow American citizens—including Haleh Esfandiari, Parnaz Azima, Kian Tajbakhsh, and Ali Shakeri—are being held against their will by the Iranian regime. I strongly condemn their detention at the hands of Iranian authorities. They should be freed immediately and unconditionally.

These individuals have dedicated themselves to building bridges between the American and Iranian people, a goal the Iranian regime claims to support. Their presence in Iran—to visit their parents or to conduct humanitarian work—poses no threat. Indeed, their activities are typical of the abiding ties that Iranian Americans have with their land of origin.

I am also disturbed by the Iranian regime's refusal so far to provide any information on

Robert Levinson, despite repeated U.S. requests. I call on Iran's leaders to tell us what they know about his whereabouts.

The United States is committed to protecting its citizens at home and abroad. We will maintain our efforts on behalf of these citizens until all of them are reunited with their families.

**Statement on the Resignation of
Daniel J. Bartlett as Counselor to the
President**

June 1, 2007

Laura and I will miss Dan Bartlett very much. Dan has been a true counselor to the President. His contribution has been immeasurable. I value his judgment, and I treasure his friendship. Since coming to work for me 14 years ago as I prepared to run for Governor, Dan has become a husband and a father. I understand his decision to make his young family his first priority. His most important job is to be a loving husband and father of three young sons. We wish him all the best.

**Proclamation 8153—Caribbean-
American Heritage Month, 2007**

June 1, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

During June, we recognize Caribbean Americans and celebrate the many ways they contribute to our Nation.

Generations of Caribbean Americans have helped shape the spirit and character of our country. These individuals are justly proud of their Caribbean roots, and they enrich the American experience by sharing their traditions, history, and values. Caribbean Americans of all walks of life have added to the vitality, success, and prosperity of our country. Their hard work and determination inspire all who dream of a better life for themselves and their families.

Our Nation is deeply grateful to the Caribbean Americans who defend our liberty as members of our Armed Forces. The service

and sacrifice of these courageous men and women are helping lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2007 as Caribbean-American Heritage Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the history and culture of Caribbean Americans and their contributions to our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:55 a.m., June 4, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 5.

**Proclamation 8154—National
Homeownership Month, 2007**

June 1, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Owning a home is part of the American dream, and National Homeownership Month is an opportunity to encourage our citizens to explore the benefits of owning a home.

Owning a home provides a source of security and stability for many of our citizens. My Administration is committed to fostering an ownership society and helping more Americans realize the great promise of our country. Today, nearly 70 percent of Americans own their homes, and the rate of minority homeownership has climbed to above 50 percent since I took office in 2001. The Department of Housing and Urban Development is continuing to enforce the Fair Housing Act to confront housing discrimination and advance equal housing opportunities for everyone. We are also working with the Congress to modernize the Federal Housing Administration in order to better provide safe, fair, and

affordable mortgages to first-time homeowners, minorities, and individuals with less than perfect credit. In addition, the American Dream Downpayment Act of 2003 is helping thousands of low to moderate income and minority families with the downpayment and closing costs on their homes. My Administration also continues to support more funding for the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program and the HOME Investment Partnership Program, which provide low-income citizens and minorities with more homeownership opportunities.

During National Homeownership Month and throughout the year, I urge citizens to consider homeownership opportunities in their communities, and I applaud American homeowners for helping fuel the economy.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2007 as National Homeownership Month. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in recognizing the importance of homeownership and building a more prosperous future.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:55 a.m., June 4, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 5.

Memorandum on Assistance for the West Bank and Gaza

June 1, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007–20

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Assistance for the West Bank and Gaza

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the

United States of America, including section 550(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006 (FOAA)(Public Law 109–102), as amended by the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006 (Public Law 109–234), sections 620K(e) and 620L(b)(4) of the Foreign Assistance Act, as added by the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–446), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby certify and report that:

With respect to the provision of assistance for the administrative and personal security costs of the Office of the President of the Palestinian Authority; for the activities of the President of the Palestinian Authority to promote democracy, peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the rule of law and to fulfill his duties as President, including, among other things, to maintain control of the management and security of border crossings and to foster the Middle East peace process; and, with respect to independent agencies:

- it is in the national security interest of the United States to provide such assistance;
- as the case may be, the President of the Palestinian Authority, the President's party, and independent agencies and any members thereof, including any individual or entity for which assistance is proposed to be provided, are not members of, appointed by, or effectively controlled by Hamas or any other foreign terrorist organization; and
- such assistance provided hereunder will not be transferred or retransferred to any member of Hamas or other foreign terrorist organization or to any entity effectively controlled by Hamas or other foreign terrorist organization.

Accordingly, I hereby waive section 550(a) of the FOAA, as amended, and section 620K(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act, as amended, with respect to such assistance, and authorize such assistance for the above purposes.

Furthermore, I hereby determine that, with respect to assistance to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank and

Gaza other than assistance covered by paragraphs (b)(1), (2), and (3) of section 620L of the Foreign Assistance Act, as amended, it is in the national security interest of the United States to provide such assistance as the Secretary of State deems appropriate, and assign to the Secretary of State the functions under section 620L(b)(4)(B) regarding the specific programs, projects, and activities to be carried out using such assistance.

I also hereby assign the functions of the President under section 550(b) and (c) of the FOAA, as amended and as carried forward under the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (Public Law 110-5), to the Secretary of State.

You are hereby authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

May 26

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

May 27

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, on the South Portico, he met with leaders of Rolling Thunder.

May 28

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Arlington, VA, where they participated in a Memorial Day wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery.

In the afternoon, they returned to Washington, DC.

May 29

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Brunswick, GA. While en route aboard Air Force One, he participated in an interview with Ron Hutcheson of the McClatchy Company. Later, he traveled to Glynco, GA, where he toured the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, on the North Portico, he participated in a photo opportunity with the 2006 Major League Soccer Cup champion Houston Dynamo.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Vietnamese democracy and human rights activists.

May 30

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President participated in an interview with Kim Strassel of the Wall Street Journal. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, in the Situation Room, the President had a video teleconference with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, two members of the Presidency Council, and Vice Presidents Tariq al-Hashimi and Adil Abd Al-Mahdi of Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Edison, NJ, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Chuck Wiemer.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Vladimir Putin of Russia to Kennebunkport, ME, on July 1-2.

The President announced his intention to nominate James L. Caswell to be Director of the Bureau of Land Management at the Department of the Interior.

The President announced his intention to nominate William J. Garvelink to be Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The President announced his intention to nominate J. Christian Kennedy to be accorded the rank of Ambassador during his tenure as Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues.

The President announced his intention to nominate Roderick W. Moore to be Ambassador to Montenegro.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ronald Jay Tenpas to be Assistant Attorney General (Environment and Natural Resources Division) at the Department of Justice, and to designate him Acting.

The President announced his intention to designate Theodore F. "Ted" Stevens as Personal Representative of the President at the 47th International Paris Air Show.

May 31

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel to the White House on June 19.

The President announced his intention to nominate David H. McCormick to be Under Secretary of the Treasury (International Affairs).

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships: Leanna Brown; Les T. Csorba; Joseph V. Del Raso; Richard S. Mroz; Joseph E. Samora; Justin J. Sayfie; and Gordon D. Sondland.

The President announced that he has named Daniel M. Price as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs.

June 1

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Situation Room, he met with the Homeland Security Council to discuss hurricane readiness.

The President announced that he has named Jonathan D. Felts as Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Political Affairs.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released May 29

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Fact sheet: Fighting Genocide in Darfur

Fact sheet: Securing the Border First

Released May 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin

Fact sheet: Holding Employers Accountable for the Workers They Hire

Fact sheet: President Bush Announces Five-year, \$30 Billion HIV/AIDS Plan

Released May 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow and Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality James L. Connaughton

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Bush To Welcome Prime Minister Olmert of Israel

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's National Parks Centennial Initiative

Fact sheet: A New International Climate Change Framework

Fact sheet: Commitment to International Development

Fact sheet: Establishing a Merit-Based System for Future Immigration

Released June 1

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley on the upcoming G-8 summit

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino and as Counselor to the President Daniel J. Bartlett

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 414, H.R. 437, H.R. 625, H.R. 1402, and H.R. 2080

Statement by the Press Secretary: Presidential Designation of Foreign Narcotics Kingpins

Fact Sheet: Overview of the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act

Fact Sheet: Ending Chain Migration

Fact sheet: Job Creation Continues—More Than 8 Million Jobs Created Since August 2003

Acts Approved by the President

Approved May 25

H.R. 2206 / Public Law 110-28
U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 *

Approved June 1

H.R. 414 / Public Law 110-29
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 60 Calle McKinley, West in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the "Miguel Angel Garcia Mendez Post Office Building"

H.R. 437 / Public Law 110-30
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 500 West Eisenhower Street in Rio Grande City, Texas, as the "Lino Perez, Jr. Post Office"

H.R. 625 / Public Law 110-31
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4230 Maine Avenue in Baldwin Park, California, as the "Atanacio Haro-Marin Post Office"

H.R. 1402 / Public Law 110-32
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 320 South Lecanto Highway in Lecanto, Florida, as the "Sergeant Dennis J. Flanagan Lecanto Post Office Building"

H.R. 2080 / Public Law 110-33
To amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to conform the District charter to revisions made by the Council of the District of Columbia relating to public education

* This public law was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.